GEORGE BARNWELL.

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BY

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AUTHOR OF CONSEQUENCES, A NOVEL;
AND CHRIST'S HOSPITAL, A POEM.

But is amuſement all?—Studious of ſong,
And yet ambitious not to ſing in vain,
I would not trifle merely, though the world
Be loudeſt in their praiſe, who do no more.

COWPER.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR H. D. SYMONDS,
NO. 20, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1798.

*59-1659

BARNWELL.

CHAP. I.

But who, for thee, O Charity! will bear
Hardſhips, and cope with perils, and with care?
Who, for thy ſake, will ſocial ſweets forego,
For ſcenes of ſickneſs, and the ſights of woe?
Who, for thy ſake, will ſeek the priſon's gloom?—

BOWLES.

THE certainty of Mental's being at Ramſgate was ſome ſlender relief to the agitated mind of Barnwell. The next morning, therefore, he buſied himſelf in enquiries, and at length diſcovered his reſidence. The whole of that day, however, Mental was from home, and Barnwell merely left his addreſs.

The houſe and family of Mr. Emery grew hateful to his ſight; his own reflections were intolerable; and the only reſource left him, was the ſociety of Milwood. This conſummate miſtreſs of hypocriſy now amuſed him with the relation of a new tale, of the manner in which ſhe had diſpoſed of the three hundred pounds. Mr. *Nehemiah Blackmore*, of *Hatton Garden*, was once more brought to figure in the ſcene. He produced a fictitious releaſe from the pretended huſband of Milwood, and a bond for five hundred pounds, payable to himſelf, with intereſt, at the expiration of three months, —The artifices of this man (who was, perhaps, one of the moſt baſe among that claſs of attornies, which calls down unmerited cenſure and infamy upon the profeſſion at large), added to the arts of Milwood, overpowered the ſcruples and heſitations of a young man half diſtracted with the perplexity of his ſituation, and he ſigned the bond.

He

He now conſidered Milwood as his wife, and was only reſtrained by her entreaties, for *yet a little more delay*, from acquainting his parent and his ſiſter with his ſituation. He was determined to confide immediately in Mental, and went early the next morning to his lodgings.

Soon as that extraordinary man obſerved Barnwell, he ran to him, and ſhaking him by the hand—"I have diſcovered him!" ſaid he:—"the monſter ſhall not eſcape the vengeance due to his enormous crimes. I will be revenged——A daughter's ſhame—a daughter's death, muſt be avenged——Middleton, or Mental, dies!"

"Middleton!" exclaimed Barnwell.

"Ay!" cried Mental—"Middleton—Captain Middleton—the friend, the intimate, the familiar, of your Emery—He

it was who deſtroyed the innocence a father had abandoned!"

"Aſtoniſhing!" exclaimed Barnwell. —"Have you ever ſeen the Captain?"

"Never," ſaid Mental: "but I have learnt his character—which is a blot upon the name of man! Mark how accidentally I diſcovered the betrayer. The diſtreſſing ſcene of my poor daughter's death ſo faſtened it's reflection on my mind, that my waking thoughts, and my midnight dreams, teemed with images of ſimilar diſtreſs and miſery. Thus haunted by the wretchedneſs of my fellow creatures, I began to contemplate how far my own abilities might leſſen or alleviate their ſufferings. I ſhuddered to reflect, how large a portion of time I had devoted to unavailing ſorrows and remorſe; and how uſeleſs had remained the property I poſſeſſed. I determined immediately to change my courſe of action; and,

and, for the purpoſe of diſcovering thoſe, whoſe lot I might ameliorate, I choſe the path of that ſuperior man among mankind, whoſe life was ſpent in doing good —the GREAT HOWARD!

"Oh, youth, had you beheld with me the ſpectacles of miſery within the priſons of the proud city, how would your youthful heart have ſickened! Tears would have ſtained your cheeks; and as you liſtened to their doleful ſtories, you would have lifted up your eyes to heaven, and have ſaid—Oh, Love omnific, *why muſt* theſe things be? The hours fly too faſt, or I could croud thy memory with many a melancholy proof of man's ingratitude!—of man's revenge!—of man's injuſtice to his fellow man! I could recount ſuch tales of tyranny of Office, the Law's moſt torturing delay, and Juſtice trampled under the inſulting foot of iron-hearted Wealth, as ſhould make '*each hair to ſtand an end!*' But I muſt confine myſelf

to one narration—one diſplay of villainy; —I will exhibit one black group of fiends infernal, maſked with the ſemblance of man's nature, in which this Middleton ſtands infamouſly conſpicuous!

"In the priſon, which is called the Fleet, there are ranges of little rooms on the ground floor, reſembling cells. I had viſited ſeveral of them, and converſed with their ſad inhabitants: I ſay ſad, becauſe there is a *merry* claſs of priſoners, who tenant the upper rooms, and are generally young men of family, who take the method of confinement merely to extort the price of their releaſe from their friends; or they are villains, who riot there, in complete ſafety, upon the ſpoils of ruined families. Thus the upper apartments frequently reſemble the galleries of an hotel, where waiters are groaning beneath the weight of wines and tavern dainties; whilſt the lower range more generally aſſumes the appearance of

an

an ill-provided lazarhouſe. 'Tis to one of theſe rooms that I am now going to introduce you.

" Figure to yourſelf, a ſtone arched roof receſs, about ten feet ſquare, which contained a bed, a table, two or three chairs, ſome boxes, and five inhabitants. One was an aged man, bald and blind: —he ſat in an armed chair by the fire; one of his arms was wrapped in flannel, being paralytic; whilſt with the other hand he kept conſtantly feeling his grand-daughter, a girl of about nineteen, with an intelligent countenance, but pale and ſickly from confinement, who was reading to him. His ſon appeared rather more than forty, and was employed at a preſs, in one corner of the room, in cutting ſmooth the edges of ſome pamphlets, which his wife was ſtitching. A little boy of ſix years old, who was in bed, ſick with the ſmall pox, made up the group.

" When my conductor introduced me, as a gentleman who had been relieving ſeveral of the priſoners, and who was deſirous of knowing the particulars of their debts, the old blind grandfather graſped tightly his grand-daughter's arm, and drew her nearer to him. The woman roſe, and curtſied; but the man kept on working, without beſtowing the leaſt notice upon his intruder. " Who is the gentleman?" ſaid the old man. " One, ſaid I, whoſe name is doubtleſs ſtrange to you, but who, poſſeſſing the power to ſoften ſorrow, has taken the liberty to intrude on yours.

" The old man ſighed. The poor woman looked as if ſhe wiſhed to welcome me; but her huſband, ſtill with his back towards me, called to her, in a rough tone, to ſit down, and go on with her work—" Haven't you been duped enough with *ſlummery* already?" cried he. " Go on—go on, do—Get theſe home;—let my

my father have a dinner to-day, for God's ſake!" "Nay, nay, Ned," cried the old man, "don't be croſs now—but give a civil anſwer to the gentleman. Is it a young gentleman, Patty?" [to his grand-daughter.] "No, grand-father," ſaid Patty. "Speak to him, Ned," ſaid the old man. "I've nothing to ſay," ſaid his ſon, "that it concerns him to hear."

"Have you no wants, my friend? ſaid I. Would you not be happy to be able to render your father and your family more comfortable than they are? "That's no concern of your's," replied he: "I labour from morning to night, and they exiſt by the fruits of it——But, come, Kate—" [to his wife]—"What do you ſnivel at?—The brat will be waking ſoon, and you'll not get theſe finiſhed. What buſineſs has that fellow to bring people here to ſtare at me?—Come—quick—quick——I ſtand ſtill."

" Struck with the uncommon behaviour of this man, I became more curious to learn his hiſtory, in proportion as he diſcovered leſs inclination to reveal it. I therefore addreſſed myſelf to the old man: —Your ſon, Sir, ſaid I, appears to me to have ſuffered ſo much from falſe profeſſions of benevolence, as to have made him ſpurn with indignation all pretenſions of that nature. " Alack-a-day! good Sir, whoever you be, I am ſure you deſerve better treatment:——but my poor Ned!——." " Hold your tongue, father," cried the ſon.

" I could no longer refrain——I approached him, and laying my hand upon his ſhoulder—Friend, ſaid I, you miſtake my character: I come not to wound your honeſt and praiſe-worthy pride—I honour independence of ſpirit—I am myſelf, alſo, a ſufferer by the falſe colours with which men paint themſelves. My heart is not whole, but my purſe is heavy—too heavy for

for an individual. I have no proſpect of happineſs before me, but in rendering ſervice where merit demands it. Then, taking his hand—Let me, my friend, ſerve you. I ſee your heart—I *feel* your *feelings*—Come, come, truſt me—I am no deceiver.

" The man looked ſteadfaſtly in my face—I never beheld ſo harſh a ſet of features—His countenance was almoſt ſavage. After he had ſtared at me a few minutes—" You may mean very well," ſaid he:—" 'tis poſſible your intentions may be good—But go, Sir, go—we are a miſerable family, and too far ſunk in wretchedneſs for any reſcue but death!—Don't hinder us, then—but go." Juſt then a man tapped at the door, and entered. " Who's that?" exclaimed the grandfather, again drawing his lovely charge nearer to him. " It's lawyer Blackmore, father," ſaid the woman."

At the name of Blackmore, Barnwell ſtarted. "Blackmore! did you ſay, Sir?" cried he.

"Yes," replied Mental, "Do you know ſuch a perſon?"

"I—I—have heard of him," ſaid Barnwell, glowing with confuſion.

"Well," continued Mental, "this Blackmore entered, and with a ſupercilious air approached towards the old man—"Once more, Mr. Norris," ſaid he, "I am come with offers of clemency to your ſon. My client by no means wiſhes to detain him here; it is far from his intention; it is by no means his wiſh; he don't deſire it; it is far from pleaſant to him; and I hope, therefore, you have prevailed upon him to——." "Wicked, wicked man!" cried the grandfather;—"you ſhare in the guilt of this tranſaction, by becoming the bearer of ſuch propoſals!"

"Leſs

"Leſs calm was his ſon. Quitting his work, he ſeized the lawyer by the ſhoulders, and thruſting him out of the apartment——"If ever you enter this place again, on this errand, raſcal!" cried he, "you will not quit it living." He followed the lawyer through the paſſage to the gate, exclaiming violently againſt him.

"Whilſt he was out of the room, his wife came to me——"Oh, God bleſs you for your goodneſs! I hope you will excuſe my poor huſband; but his brain is almoſt turned, Sir, by bad uſage. I wiſh I could tell you our ſtory; but he is grown ſo wild, we dare not contradict him. Oh, he is ſo altered!—There was not a kinder creature living, a more tender and affectionate huſband or father, till that bad man, Captain Middleton——."

"Here the huſband returned, and the poor woman, with evident ſymptoms of fear, went to her work.

"Son,

"Son, ſon," ſaid the old man, "I charge thee, let this kind gentleman know our ſtory. Come, now, I pray, do. I am ſure he is a good-hearted gentleman, and will ſerve thee."

"Poor old man!" ſaid his ſon; "and you my dear girl [to his daughter]; my little boy too; and you Kate [to his wife], I feel for you all! But, pſha', what but pain reſults from feeling! I will not yield to tenderneſs—Come, come, to work, to work.—I pray you, Sir, to leave us."

"Here there was a violent burſt of laughter in the court yard, juſt within hearing. Not far from the window, a party of young fellows were playing with ſome of their miſtreſſes, and their mirth was as loud as obſcene.

"Daughter," cried the younger Norris, "ſtop your ears—Leave the room."

"Oh,

"Oh, no—no!—" cried the old man, ſtill holding her.

"Oh, God!" exclaimed the ſon—— where is the equity of our laws—where is the juſtice of our land?—To be caged, thus, amidſt the moſt abandoned of ſociety!—and for what crime?—Refuſing to proſtitute my own child!"

"How! exclaimed I.

"Even as I have ſaid," replied he. "Come, ſit you down, and for very madneſs will I tell you our tale. But mark me, I court not your pity—I ſpread no nets for your compaſſion!—That venerable old man, my father, about ſixty years ago, entered into buſineſs in the city of Canterbury. I was his only child; I learnt his art, that of bookbinder and ſtationer. My mother died—I married; and as my father declined in years, I conducted our concerns. Nineteen years of time

time had paſſed ſince my marriage, when there came to be quartered in our city, a regiment of militia. We kept a library, and of courſe our ſhop became a ſort of lounge for the ladies of Canterbury. The officers of the regiment ſoon diſcovered this, and peſtered us with their company. My girl, there, though now pale and ſickly-looking, was then as fair a wench as any in all Canterbury. Her beauty obtained her many fulſome flatteries, of which we endeavoured to ſhew her the inſignificant value; and I believe the girl had ſenſe enough to treat them, for the moſt part, with juſt that civil indifference they deſerved:—but there was one ſcoundrel—a handſome fellow, too—a captain in the regiment, who made a more than ordinary impreſſion upon my poor girl's heart. His attachment was evident; his attentions too conſpicuous to be overlooked; but his purpoſes, his infernal purpoſes, he well concealed. Under the maſk of kindneſs for me, and

my

my family, he held out a bait, which my active and induſtrious ſpirit too eagerly graſped at. About that time a librarian at Margate failed; the ſhop and buſineſs were to be diſpoſed of; and having obtained, by his frequent viſits, a moſt familiar footing in our family, Captain Middleton, after a proper introduction, offered to lend me a ſum ſufficient to purchaſe them, upon the joint bond of my father and myſelf; with the ſimple conditions, that an elderly lady, his friend, ſhould board and lodge there. Unfortunately we accepted his treacherous offer; we completed the purchaſe; and my father, being indiſpoſed, and having gradually loſt his ſight, removed to Margate, accompanied by my daughter.

" 'Twas not long ere the real purpoſe of this ſeeming generoſity was expoſed, by the following accident:——Captain Middleton frequently rode from Canterbury to Margate, and never failed paying his

his reſpects to this old lady, whom he ſettled in our houſe. I myſelf, having to ſuperintend the buſineſs both at Canterbury and Margate, alſo had frequent occaſions to be there. It happened, that, one evening as I walked round the garden at the back of the houſe, I heard the voice of Captain Middleton, loudly diſputing in a ſummer-houſe with Mrs. Maſters, the old lady; and as I paſſed the door, which was ſhut, I heard him diſtinctly utter—'By God, Madam, I am trifled with:—do you imagine I have been paying three hundred pounds for mere *gape ſeed!* I tell you, the ſtay of the regiment at Canterbury is uncertain; and I am determined to poſſeſs this jewel before I quit Kent.' 'I ſay, Sir,' replied the old Beldam, 'that your impatience will ruin every thing. The girl loves you, I am certain; but ſhe has been ſtrictly educated, and her notions of virtue are not to be overcome ſo eaſily as we conquered Elinor Mental's.'

"Judge,"

"Judge," ſaid Mental to Barnwell at this part of his narrative, "how I felt at that name, and at the ſubſequent remarks!—I ſtruggled hard; and, in part, concealed my emotion, as I longed to hear the concluſion of the tale.

"Preſuming," ſaid Norris, "upon what I heard, how much I was intereſted in their diſcourſe, I continued to liſten. 'Ay,' cried Middleton, 'that affair was well managed:—to the laſt hour of my life, Mother Maſters, I ſhall be indebted to you for that buſineſs; but here you boggle curſedly; and yet this chit has not half the cunning of the jilt Mental.' 'True,' replied the other; 'but there is ſo much more virtue and *fuſs* in the way than there was with Mental. Beſides, here are a father and mother; Mental was the caſt-away charge of a neglectful boarding-ſchool governeſs.——I repeat, Sir, you muſt have patience, or you will ſpoil all,' Here their converſation broke off; but I had heard enough to kindle a fire in my veins.

veins. I am by nature warm, and impatient of inſult;—burſting open the door, I ſeized the villain, and exhauſted my rage in curſes on his head. Guilt made him coward--He ſubmitted tamely to my anger —The woman left the arbour, and in a few hours the houſe. In vain he attempted to palliate his intentions. I was deaf to every thing he ſaid. I continued roughly to handle him, and never relinquiſhed my hold, till I had kicked him completely out of doors.

"Every hour ſince that, the mean and cowardly villian has been planning the ruin of my family. His firſt ſtep was, to put the bond he held immediately in execution againſt me; and, as a fit engine for his infernal purpoſe, he choſe the man you have juſt now ſeen as a lawyer. If you know any thing of law, you need not to be told, Sir, that, in the hands of wicked men, it may be eaſily made the deſtruction of poor debtors.

"My

"My buſineſs was neglected, in the attendance neceſſary to carry on a fruitleſs defence againſt his extortions; my little capital was exhauſted; my father's houſes were ſold; my cuſtomers forſook me; my real creditors flocked about me; my effects were ſeized, and ſold. But the aim of this vilian was revenge; he therefore preferred ſeizing my perſon; and having hunted me from one part of the kingdom to another, for ſome months, he has at length ſucceeded to the utmoſt of his malicious wiſh. My poor, infirm parent will not quit me, but prefers this dungeon to a workhouſe. My daughter he will not truſt a minute from him, being tormented with the notion that Middleton will yet obtain her.

"I have had friends, falſe ſummer friends, whom now I never ſee. Judge, then, Sir, if there is not ſome excuſe for my ferocious diſpoſition. I am like a hunted beaſt taken in the ſpoils; and

have

have loſt all hope in heaven, all confidence in man. I labour hard to gain a ſlender ſuſtenance for my family; and here, even here, my purſuer worries me with his damned propoſals, to releaſe me from my cage, upon yielding my poor child a prey to his lewd deſires. But rather would I dig her grave with my own hands—ay, rather would I dig one general gulph, and plunge wife, father, children, ſelf, all living, to it's bottom, than proſtitute the child I have given birth to!"

"Is there ſuch a villain in exiſtence, ſaid I, as this Middleton? Where is his reſidence?

"Six months," replied Norris, "I have been immured in this priſon; of courſe he is living, but where I know not. He has never been here himſelf; but all his propoſals are made through the medium of the lawyer Blackmore.

"I have

" I have heard that the wicked wretch, who has been his aſſiſtant in many a ſcene of infamy, the Mrs. Maſters, is now dangerouſly ill at Ramſgate, and lingers under all the horrors of remorſe, in expectation of her diſſolution."

" At Ramſgate !—Can you addreſs me to her, my friend, ſaid I. I have inducements to ſee this woman, of which you have no conception. You have mentioned, in your narrative, the name of one, whom I ought to have cheriſhed in my own boſom, but whom I abandoned to the looſe guardianſhip of an hireling. The Miſs Mental, alluded to by the baſe Mrs. Maſters, muſt have been my poor, deſerted daughter.

" Gracious Goodneſs !" exclaimed Mrs. Norris, lifting up her eyes; " and what has become of the poor creature !"

" Dead!

"Dead!——to my comfort—dead!—exclaimed I. But if her ſeducer lives; and if, by the inſtructions of this Maſters, I can diſcover him, vengeance ſhall yet o'ertake him. This very night I will ſet off for Ramſgate; and a part of the vengeance I will hurl on this wretch, ſhall be the deliverance of your perſecuted family.

"Alas! good gentleman, "you know not how deeply our diſtreſſes have involved us," ſaid the elder Norris. "A thouſand pounds would hardly clear us: and then my poor Ned would be aſhamed to ſee Canterbury again."

"No! exclaimed I, he ſhall not be aſhamed.——I had reſolved upon my conduct; and contriving to ſlip my purſe into Mrs. Norris's hand, unobſerved by her huſband, I took my leave of theſe victims of iniquitous power. The neceſſary directions for their liberation were given; and I arrived at Ramſgate in time

to

to hear from the lips of the dying wretch, Maſters, the horrible tale of my Elinor's deſtruction. I obtained the addreſs of Middleton, which was in London. I returned thither the next day, and traced him to Emery's, in Portland Place, where I learnt, that he had accompanied the family hither.

" After ſpending ſome time in a neceſſary attention to Norris's family, which will ſoon be at liberty, I returned to Margate, and from thence in a little fiſhing boat to this place."

" What an extraordinary diſcovery!" ſaid Barnwell, when Mental concluded.

" Yes," replied Mental; " and I am determined to act deciſively upon it.—Where is Emery's houſe?—I'll ſee this Middleton to-day."

"I will conduct you, if you pleaſe," ſaid Barnwell. "But, before we go, if you could beſtow an hour's attention upon a circumſtance, that involves in it's conſequences my future deſtiny——."

"That Milwood, you allude to.——I have not forgotten, amidſt my own concerns, your danger, youth! Nor, believe me, am I indifferent to your welfare. If you will unburthen your breaſt of it's anxieties, you ſhall experience from me all that a fond parent is deſirous of beſtowing on his ſon."

Barnwell related every occurrence that had taken place ſince his connection with Milwood.

CHAP. II.

Oh! I ſhall never, never hear her voice!
The ſpring time ſhall return, the iſles rejoice;
But faint and weary I ſhall meet the morn,
And 'mid the cheering ſunſhine weep forlorn!

BOWLES.

WHEN Barnwell had concluded his ſtory, having concealed nothing from Mental, but the means by which he obtained the three hundred pounds, the latter fixed his eyes upon the former, and in an affectionate tone of voice——"Beware, youth, beware!" ſaid he. "I ſhall think on your ſtory: in the mean time, lead me to Middleton."

"Upon their arrival at Mr. Emery's, they were ſurpriſed to find the whole houſe in confuſion. Maria Freeman, whoſe health

had been ſome time declining, was that morning ſo extremely indiſpoſed, as to be confined to her bed with ſymptoms of a delirious fever. Upon their entering the parlour, Miſs Emery, and her mama, immediately began a moſt lamentable duet upon the *monſtrous diſagreeableneſs* of people's being ill.——

"It makes one," ſaid Miſs Emery, "ſo vapouriſh, to ſee the old doctors, and the apothecaries, and nurſes!—"

"Oh! abſolutely," cried her mama, "it's the moſt exceſſive dull thing in the world! May be ſhe may die, too!—— Really, Emma, I'll return to the Pavilion —I do hate any thing that reminds one of one's latter end. Where's Charlotte? ——I hope ſhe is not ſo mad as to be in Miſs Freeman's chamber!"

At that inſtant Charlotte entered—— "So, Mr. Barnwell," ſaid ſhe—"here's havoc

havoc you've made! Why, Sir, if Miſs Freeman dies, you'll be indicted for murder! She is ſcreaming after Mr. Barnwell, do you know, in ſuch a violent manner, that all the old Quizzes are frightened out of their wits."

"What's all this trifling?" cried Mental, ſtarting from his chair, and thumping his oaken ſtick on the floor. "Shew me to Captain Middleton, Sir——I did not come here to do penance, in liſtening to the vapid effuſions of empty heads, and iron hearts—Shew me to Middleton!"

The ladies were quite terrified—"Lord bleſs me, Mr. Barnwell," cried Mrs. Emery, "who have you brought here?"

"This gentleman, Madam, has very particular buſineſs with Captain Middleton."

"Do, pray, then, have the goodneſs to ſhew him into the library. Mr. Emery and the Captain are both there."

At the door of the library Barnwell announced, that a gentleman deſired to ſee Captain Middleton; and Mr. Emery was politely retiring——

"Let me requeſt your preſence, Sir," ſaid Mental: "the buſineſs I am about to enter on requires evidence."

Mr. Emery returned. Captain Middleton bowed to Mental, and entreated him to ſit. Barnwell, by deſire of the latter, alſo was ſeated. After a pauſe—

"Gentlemen," ſaid Mental, "I am commiſſioned with the execution of a moſt unpleaſant buſineſs. A perſon, whom I ſincerely regard, has ſuſtained a moſt ſerious injury. He was unfortunately deprived, by death, of a moſt amiable wife,

wife, at a period when her maternal attentions began to be loudly called for by their daughter, a beautiful girl of three years old. His affairs, about the ſame time, compelled this perſon to leave England for ſome years: being unwilling to take his daughter with him abroad; and, having no female relative or friend with with whom he could depoſit his heart's ſole treaſure, he was compelled to place his child with the governeſs of a reſpectable boarding ſchool. Here ſhe remained, and increaſed in beauty and accompliſhments as ſhe grew in years.

"Well, gentlemen, her father returned, after a long abſence, to his native home, and ſettled, in affluent circumſtances, in a retired part of the country. —Remaining ſtill a widower, for that, and poſſibly for other reaſons, he did not immediately after his return ſend for his daughter from the ſeminary, where, he was convinced, ſhe was improving her-

ſelf in the attainments adapted to her ſex and fortune.

" Thus ſhe continued at ſchool till ſhe was about ſeventeen years of age. You'll ſay, perhaps, her father was to blame to continue the care of her, at that thoughtleſs ſeaſon of her life, in the hands of a mere ſchool-miſtreſs. Events have proved that it was wrong; but he, a ſort of a Recluſe, little imagined that there were beings baſe enough, among mankind, to plan the ſlow deſtruction of innocence and beauty. We, who are men of the world, know things better, Captain Middleton. *We* know, that girls at the age of ſeventeen, under no other controul than that of a negligent governeſs, or a depraved teacher, are very *comeatable* articles,—eh!"

There was an expreſſive ſneer that accompanied this laſt ſentence, which made Middleton tremble.

" Sir!

"Sir!—Eh!" cried the latter; "I don't clearly underſtand your drift."

"You will ſoon," ſaid Mental. "I meant merely to remark on the extreme ignorance of the old fool, who could truſt ſuch a *charming temptation* in the way of *us red coats!* (for I've ſerved myſelf in the army) and then be ſurpriſed at it's conſequences.

"But, to proceed with my tale.—In the neighbourhood of this young lady's reſidence there was quartered a regiment of militia, which was graced by a Captain of moſt elegant exterior, and perfectly *accompliſhed*; that is, he had run one man through the body, and wounded ſeveral; had figured in a *crim. con.* action, knew the uſe of loaded dice, and would ſee you a *three-bottle* man under the table.

" For the accommodation of these *dashing* gentlemen, there are certain beings, who assume to themselves the name of women; and, under the character and appearance of gentlewomen, contrive an introduction to the young and inexperienced part of their sex, with the infernal design of debauching their morals, and rendering them an easy prey to seduction. ——Unfortunately for my poor friend, a wretch of this description found means to gain the confidence of his daughter, whose volatile disposition, and full flow of careless spirits, exposed a heart, unguarded by principles, to the easy conquest of this harridan.

" The Captain was introduced to the poor victim, as a friend of this creature's; and, to be brief, the consequences were, the ruin of the daughter, and the consummation of many miseries to the heart-broken father!"

" Unhappy

"Unhappy man!" ſaid Mr. Emery:—"is he ſtill living?"

"You ſhall hear," cried Mental.——"The arts of thoſe experienced practitioners in iniquity was ſo refined, that the deluded girl eloped from the houſe of her governeſs, and not one probable clue to a diſcovery was left. You are a father, Sir;—Captain Middleton, I believe, is not: but any man, who has the common feelings of his nature, may picture to himſelf the agony of her parent, when he heard the dread tidings of her fall, and was doomed to remain ignorant of her fate!"

Captain Middleton, upon whom Mental all along kept his ſtern eyes fixed, began now to half-riſe from his chair, wiped his face with his handkerchief, twirled the chain of his watch round his fingers, and betrayed various other ſymptons of uneaſineſs. Mental continued——

" But, gentlemen, there was an hour approaching, replete with yet more piercing anguiſh for his ſoul. The unhappy parent lived to ſee that daughter——but, oh, God! what a ſight—He beheld her —ſuffering the laſt agonies of death—on the bare floor of a mean hovel—ſurrounded by miſery and want!—and whilſt the poiſon of proſtitution conſumed her frame, the horrors of reflection on a guilty courſe agoniſed her mind! He ſaw her die!!— If, then, the wretched parent, at that moment, had ſeen and known the author of this miſery, ſhould you, gentlemen, have been ſupriſed to hear, that in the phrenſy of his deſpair, he had imbrued his hands in the villain's blood? But 'twas not ſo. Ere he became acquainted with the ſtory I have related to you, his agonies had mellowed into grief, his phrenſy into ſettled melancholy.

" Meanwhile, the perpretrator of this deed was buſily employed in freſh purſuits,

ſuits, of the ſame nature, aided by the ſame infernal ſpirit in the form of woman. Undaunted by any of the *vulgar prejudices* of humanity, or feelings; unchecked by the incommodious principles of honour, or virtue, he plunged boldly on, to proſecute the ruin of more beauty; and further to extend the deſolations of domeſtic peace——a family, raiſed by his perfidious promiſes to the pinnacle of proſperous hopes, was hurled from thence to the abyſs of wretchedneſs, poverty, and the views of endleſs thraldom:—this was the paſtime of the all-daring villain!"

Captain Middleton's behaviour now expreſſed thoſe feelings he could no longer ſmother. Starting from his chair—— "You have fixed your eyes on me, Sir, in a manner I am unaccuſtomed to, and accompany your diſmal ſtories with ſuch ſignificant glances upon me—I can't miſtake their meaning:—but, Sir, whoever this friend of your's may be, he is deceived,

if

if he has inſinuated the moſt diſtant charge of this ſort upon a man of my reſpectability!"

"Your reſpectability!—ha, ha!" cried Mental, with a ſneer.

"D——n, Sir," cried Middleton, "I will not brook this conduct. Let me ſee this injured father, and I will confront him to his face!"

"You *will*—then *do*," ſaid Mental.—"Behold him, thou reptile!—behold him here!!"

As he ſpoke, he roſe with a majeſtic air, and, folding his arms, ſtood oppoſite to Middleton, with a look expreſſive of the deepeſt indignation; whilſt the aſtoniſhed Captain ſtaggered back a full pace, and trembled; Mr. Emery remaining in complete amazement.——A ſilence of ſome minutes enſued.

"The

"The names of Maſters, and Norris, will convince you, Sir," ſaid Mental, "your iniquities are no longer ſecrets. The ſteps that have led to this diſcovery I ſhall not retrace. I *know* you are the ſeducer and betrayer of my child, the oppreſſor of innocence, and, this inſtant, I demand the paltry ſatisfaction of your life."

Middleton remained dumb. Mr. Emery, extremely terrified, attempted to interpoſe.

"Silence, man," cried Mental: "You don't *know me*. I am not one, who frames, deſtroys, and frames anew his reſolutions! I come not in the moment of paſſion, to wreak revenge, but calmly to inflict upon a villain the puniſhment of death!"

"You come to murder, then?" cried Emery.

"Sir,"

"Sir," ſaid Middleton, after a long ſtruggle of cowardice,—"Sir,—I—ſee—that—you are—determined, not to liſten to any thing I offer in my defence; and, therefore,——name—your—place—and time, and take what ſatisfaction you pleaſe."

"To-morrow, at break of day, which will be four o'clock—behind the mill, two fields from the adjoining lane," ſaid Mental, in a firm tone.

"I'll—meet you there—" ſaid Middleton, who, on this occaſion, was indeed a coward; though, till this moment, he had always retained the credit of great courage. But there was an inexpreſſible ſomething in the countenance of the father, which the ſeducer of the daughter trembled to gaze upon, ſpite of his inſenſibility to all virtuous emotions.

"Shall

"Shall we meet alone, or ſhall thoſe who are now preſent attend us there?" aſked Mental.

"Is it *impoſſible* to prevent this meeting?" ſaid Emery. "Can no conceſſions —no recompence—."

"Are you a father," interrupted Mental, "and *you* talk of recompenſe?—If, indeed, he has power to raiſe the dead, and make that pure and ſpotleſs, which his luſt has ſullied, there might be meaning in your ſpeech:—I know no other *recompenſe* that he can offer, or I can receive."

At length the meeting was arranged. It was agreed, that Mr. Emery and Barnwell ſhould attend; and Mental retired.

CHAP. III.

——Innocence, when once thy tender flower
The ſickly taint has touch'd, where is that pow'r
That ſhall bring back it's fragrance, or reſtore
The tints of lovelineſs—that ſhine no more?

BOWLES.

NO ſooner had Mental left the houſe, than Mrs. Emery and her daughters, attended by their *ſhadows*, Morley and Eaſtwood, ruſhed into the library, to learn the errand of ſo ſtrange a *Quiz*, as he was termed by Lord Morley.

It was in vain to attempt concealment, and therefore, partly by Emery, partly by Middleton, and partly by Barnwell, the whole hiſtory was related of Barnwell's firſt acquaintance with him—of the loſs of his wife—the fate of his daughter—and the reſult of that morning's viſit.

"A duel!"

"A duel!" ſcreamed Mrs. Emery.—"Captain Middleton it ſhall not take place—Run, my Lord—Run, Mr. Eaſtwood, to that fat, ugly fellow of a juſtice we ſaw yeſterday; and, for heaven's ſake, entreat him to get all the conſtables in the place ready to keep the peace."

"I inſiſt upon it, my Lord, you do not obey ſuch orders—as you will anſwer to my honor. I muſt confeſs that I, as well as many others, have been guilty of improprieties in my younger days, of which, I readily acknowledge this one of the worſt. As to the death of the girl, God knows, I was perfectly ignorant, and of her want, for I have not ſeen her for years: in fact, I had almoſt forgotten her. The encountering the old man in this way is awkward, certainly, very awkward; but it is unavoidable."

"Oh, you cruel wretch, you," cried Mrs. Emery—"when you know the va-

lue

lue of your life to Mr. Emery, to myſelf, to thouſands—thus to ſport with it! A figure like your's, Captain Middleton, to be ſhot at by ſuch an old, ugly, wizard-looking being as that——It ſhall not be —I will go myſelf, this moment, to—."

"Lor, Ma'!" ſaid Miſs Emery—"Do you think Captain Middleton can't level a piſtol better than old Mental? I have not the leaſt fear, but he'll kill the old brute."

"And then, will he not be obliged to fly the kingdom?"

"Oh, only for a little time, till it's blown over."

"Only look at Mr. Barnwell!" cried Charlotte, who had been watching his countenance ſome time: "really, now, by the exceſſive length of his viſage, one would

would imagine *he* were going to fight a duel."

In fact, Barnwell's mind was abſorbed in very different meditations. He was anxiouſly calculating the time that had elapſed ſince he had diſpatched the jewels to London; and reflecting on the horrible conſequences, ſhould the man prove diſhoneſt. Arouſed, by this remark of Charlotte, from his reverie, he unfortunately betrayed his abſence by a ſham laugh, and exclaiming——"A duel! What duel?"

"There's a hard-hearted wretch, now!" ſaid Charlotte, "to laugh at ſuch a ſerious thing as a duel!"

"Whatever the event of to-morrow may be," ſaid Middleton, "this trifling upon the ſubject is unbecoming. I have made up my mind, Madam:" [to Mrs. Emery] "I am bound in honour to give the

the meeting; and whoever attempts to prevent it, will throw a ſtain upon my character, that nothing but ſuicide will efface."

Mrs. Emery ſhrieked and fainted; her daughters flew to her aſſiſtance, and the party ſeparated. Mr. Emery gave directions to Barnwell to diſcharge ſome debts of Captain Middleton's, and retiring with the Captain, to arrange ſome mutual concerns, he deſired Barnwell to let him have his accounts to examine in the evening.

Upon the arrival of the poſt, Barnwell was ſurpriſed to receive a letter, in a ſtrange hand-writing; but his ſurpriſe was ſoon loſt in ſtupefaction when he read the contents, as follow—

"SIR.

"You have been moſt groſsly abuſed by the perſon, whoever it may be, that conſigned the jewels to you. Their value is nothing more than the gold

and

and ſilver in which they are ſet, about ſeven or eight pounds—The ſtones are all ſham—Having buſineſs that will keep me here a day or two longer, I thought it my duty to appriſe you of this affair.

"I am, Sir, your's,

"TIM. BROWN."

Some minutes had elapſed before Barnwell removed his eyes from the paper; and when he did, they were covered by a thick film, that obſcured every object around him. Cold ſweats ſucceeded; and he had nearly, very nearly, fainted.

"Oh, Milwood!" exclaimed he——"Milwood, thou haſt deſtroyed me!"

He ruſhed out of the houſe, and immediately ran to the little cottage. Breathleſs and pale, he approached the ſyren, with the letter open in his hand, and gave it her to peruſe. With the moſt complete hypocriſy imaginable, ſhe ſhrieked—ſhe raved—and imprecated curſes on the man,

man, though the ſham jewels had been made to her own orders. She proteſted moſt ſolemnly, and impiouſly called on heaven to witneſs her oaths, that they were her mother's jewels; and either the man, ſhe ſaid, muſt have exchanged them, or ſome ſecret thief in her former reſidences.——

"Can my Barnwell," ſaid ſhe, "for a moment harbour a thought ſo much beneath his liberal nature to indulge, as to ſuppoſe me privy to a fraud? What is there, Barnwell, in my nature like ſuch mean diſhoneſty? Reflect, and anſwer, Sir, whether a perſon of my ſpirit, even were ſhe vicious, would ſtoop to the paltry pilfering tricks of a Ring-dropper? Barnwell, it would have hurt me leſs, had you accuſed me of a murder!"

"Nay, Milwood," ſaid the youth, "I have not accuſed you; but I am diſtracted by the event! What can be done?

Mr.

Mr. Emery has ordered me this evening, this very evening, to make up my accounts.—I am loſt for ever! Never more can I return to him—And whither, oh, whither can I go!"

In the utmoſt agony, he threw himſelf in a chair, and leaned his head upon the table. Milwood, affecting the profoundeſt thought, walked about the room.—"The deficiency muſt not be known," cried ſhe. "We muſt prevent this diſcovery by any means."

"I ſee no poſſible way," ſaid Barnwell.

"I ſee but one," ſaid ſhe; "and that you will ſcruple to adopt. 'Tis, indeed, one that, upon a *ſmall* neceſſity, ought not to be reſorted to; but when, if adopted, it will, to a certainty, prevent diſgrace to yourſelf and family, the utter ruin of all your future proſpects, the horrors of

a priſon, and the character of a thief—— I think, ſelf-preſervation calls on us to adopt it."

"Name it," ſaid Barnwell.

"FORGERY."

Starting from the chair, with all the wildneſs of deſpair expreſſed in his countenance—"Wretch!—Sorcereſs!—Away—Away! There is a dreadful ruin waits on thy accurſed beauty, and I now ſee it in all it's horrors!"

He would have left the room; but Milwood, ſeizing his arm, detained him.

"Barnwell, were I that dæmon your deſpair now exhibits to your mind, I ſhould at once relinquiſh you. What more could ſuch a ſpirit wiſh, than that, in this diſordered ſtate, you ſhould ſeek your maſter. Detection and diſgrace, chains and

and impriſonment, would follow; but, no, Barnwell!—too cloſely woven is my own deſtiny with thine to ſuffer this: too deeply impreſſed upon my heart, oh, youth, are thy endearments, thus to be relinquiſhed. And, by the power that ſees that heart, I ſwear, no fate ſhall ſeparate us. No, though thine obſtinate reſiſtance ſhould doom thee to the unwholeſome damps of a dark dungeon—ſhould load theſe manly limbs with fetters—I would follow thee, and ſhare in all thy wretchedneſs. I—innocently though it be—yet, I have been the cauſe of your calamities; and never, never will I yield my title to a ſhare of the bitter draught!"

With all the ſofteſt, tendereſt expreſſions, ſhe hung upon him; ſhe embraced him, and bedewed his cheeks with her tears. The ſoul of Barnwell was in an agony—He ſighed—He ſobbed aloud—He called upon his mother, his Eliza, and invoked the departed ſpirit of his father to direct him!

"Oh, think upon the agonies of thy dear friends!" cried ſhe. "Can you reflect a moment on the phrenſy that will ſeize your venerable mother—the pangs that will rend your ſiſter's heart, when they hear a ſon, a brother——."

"Hold, hold!" cried Barnwell. "They *muſt not, ſhall not!*——Tell me the means that can prevent diſcovery —— Quick, quick, unfold them, that, without the poſſibility of a retraction, I may pledge my ſoul's eternal welfare to their adoption!"

"Suppoſe a bill of Exchange was drawn upon Mr. Emery; ſay for five hundred pounds at two months;—could you not imitate his acceptance?—If ſo, I would myſelf undertake to negotiate it; and long ere it became due we could provide means to prevent it's being preſented for payment; and thus the whole tranſaction would remain a ſecret within our own breaſts—You heſitate!—"

"Oh,

"Oh, Milwood, what a propoſal! Miſerable wretch, that I am, how am I fallen, that I can with patience liſten to it!"

"Is this a time for abſtract reaſonings? Is this a moment to moralize, Barnwell? If you are not determined to ſurrender every hope—if you are not determined to expoſe yourſelf, and all that are dear to to you, to infamy,—you muſt act—."

"I do not heſitate at the crime,—for I am ſunk beneath thoſe ſcruples; but I tremble at the dreadful conſequences of it's diſcovery."

"Abſurd argument!" ſaid Milwood. "A *preſent*, an almoſt *inſtant* diſcovery, muſt take place, if we do not reſort to this, or ſome ſimilar preventive. Againſt the chance of *future* detection there are ten thouſand odds. Time, at leaſt, will be gained; in which we may guard our-

ſelves againſt the worſt conſequences. Ruin is at the door; and your are weakly arguing, if it be wiſe to fly from it, becauſe there is a poſſibility we may again encounter it."

"But," ſaid Barnwell; "even if I were to adopt this dreadful alternative, how are you ſure that you could procure money for this bill."

"I will engage for three hundred of the five in leſs than ſix hours time."

"But—But—I—cannot—it is impoſſible!"

"Barnwell, this weakneſs is unworthy of your nature.—Determine—Are you prepared to tell Mr. Emery, that you have robbed him of three hundred pounds?—Are you prepared to meet the anger of your benefactor, the curſes of a a parent, the madneſs of your ſiſter?—"

"Hold

"Hold—Hold—for heaven's ſake——or you will drive me to commit that, in deſperation, which, on reflection to have done, will plunge me to the grave of ſuicide!".

"And rather, Barnwell, much rather, would I ſee you dead at my feet by your own hands, than behold you among felons at the bar of juſtice, a ſpectacle to a gaping multitude!"

"Oh, God! that muſt not be!——He would not, he could not, ſurely, proceed to ſuch extremity!"

"Will you, then, truſt to the hazard of *his clemency*, a matter of ſuch import? —Puerile folly!——Barnwell, I will myſelf ſave you from the effects of your own cowardice."

She produced a ſtamp from her pocket-book, and drew a bill of Exchange upon Mr. Emery, payable in two months, for five hundred pounds.

In vain Barnwell asked her a string of questions——How she came by the stamp —for what purpose she could have it—if she had ever indulged such a thought before—and many others.

"When you receive the money to replace what you have taken, I will answer all these jealous questions; till then, I am dumb.——There," [having finished it] "I have drawn it in the fictitious name of Emily D'Alembert, and dated it from Southampton. I shall pass it as the signature of an emigrant friend. Now, in a word, will you put Mr. Emery's acceptance to it, or not?"

"Oh, Milwood!—over what a dreadful precipice do we hover!"

"And yet, insensible to the danger, you loiter upon it's very brink.——Barnwell, if you have the courage of a man; nay, if you merely possess the policy of a coward

coward, heſitate no longer. If you perſiſt in theſe obſtinate ſcruples,—by every thing moſt ſacred, I ſwear, theſe eyes ſhall never view the miſery that awaits you!—If you leave this room with a refuſal, I will not quit it living! I have endured wretchedneſs enough already in this accurſed world of woe, and will endure no more. This ſteel is my ſovereign antidote againſt all future miſery. I will henceforth live happy—or will ceaſe to live!"

She drew the dagger from her boſom, and, in the act, threw back that part of her dreſs that concealed the moſt lovely neck and breaſts—that ever kindled anarchy of deſires in the heart of man!——Fixing the dagger's point to her left breaſt—

"Barnwell—my fate is in your hands—Approach me not—You know me reſolute—If you ſtir one pace from the table, that moment the dagger ſhall be

ſheathed here; nor will I remove it's point till you accept the bill, or quit the room: ——Now, chooſe."——

"Where are the boaſted powers of Reaſon now!——I know *you reſolute*, indeed!—and am thus reduced to Murder—or Forgery!——If there is a Power, who ſees the ſtruggles, the deſperate conflicts of this hour—oh, let me hope, that, in my account hereafter——Why do I reaſon?—All clue of right or wrong is loſt—my brain is fire—my heart is ice—I have no more the agency of my own will! ——Woman—or dæmon—which-ſoe'er thou art—I am your ſlave, for ever!—Lead me, then, onward in your own paths, be their termination Heaven, or Hell!"

He forged Mr. Emery's acceptance!—Milwood ſprung towards the table, hurried the bill into her boſom, and covered her devoted victim with careſſes.

CHAP. IV.

Every man, whoſe knowledge, or whoſe virtue, can give value to his opinion, looks with ſcorn or pity on him, whom the panders of luxury have drawn within their influence, and about to be torn to pieces by tailors and jockies, vintners and attornies. RAMBLER.

AFTER an abſence of two hours, Milwood returned to the cottage, where Barnwell waited in a ſtate of mind beyond the powers of language to deſcribe ——Guilt, terror, and remorſe, haunted his breaſt, and created there a hell of torments!

She tendered him a Bank note of three hundred pounds. Haſtily ſnatching it from her hands, he caſt on her a look of mingled love and horror, and ruſhed out of the room.

As he was turning quickly round the corner of a ſtreet, he almoſt ſtumbled over his firſt London acquaintance, Mr. Rigby, who had left Mr. Emery's the firſt winter of his arrival.——

" Barnwell!—In the name of Oddity, what makes you from London? Poſitively, I ſhould as ſoon have expected to ſee the ſtatue at Charing Croſs trotting ten miles an hour, as to meet you at a Watering-place:——but, *excuſez moi*—you look upon the *queer*—What's the *buſineſs?*—You were running—*Excuſez moi*—but I met Nick Snatch, the bailiff here—I beg you'll make no ceremony—But, trip.—"

" Bailiff!——Nick Snatch!——I really don't comprehend you, Sir!"

" No matter—change the ſubject.—All the world talks of a *ſmaſh* in a certain quarter—Perhaps *that's* the *buſineſs* that

queers

queers you. Expenſive ſtyle—ſpeculative man—loan at a diſcount—and no bonus—poor Emery!"

"Really, Mr. Rigby," cried Barnwell, vexed to be detained at ſuch a moment, and by ſuch a trifler—"Really, Mr. Rigby, when you and I converſe, we ſhould call in an interpreter."

"Oh, *excuſez moi*—Change the ſubject—Do you want a horſe—my Fireball—ſorry to part with him—perfectly ſound—good wind—full of fleſh—fine figure—faſt trotter—muſt go—want *Spaniſh!*"

"Spare yourſelf, Sir; I am in no want of a horſe; but rather in haſte."

"Oh, change the ſubject.—What do you think?—bought a curricle, two cheſnuts, plated harneſs——knocked down at——what think you?"

"No

"No matter what, Sir," ſaid Barnwell. "Good morning."

"Why, where the devil are you running?—Change the ſubject. Who's in Ramſgate?"

"The whole family."

"Oh—*excuſez moi*——*Promenade—nous allons*—and ſeizing hold of Barnwell's arm, he was conſtrained to ſubmit to his company. "Change the ſubject—What do you think?—Such a meſs!—quarrelled with dad—wouldn't bleed—cut him completely—never ſpeak—drain mama—coax ſiſters—*come over* the Iſraelites—all won't do—hardly enough to buy Jew bail—afraid of the *Morrow of All Souls*—curſe their *Terms*—wiſh old dad would trip—ſnug coffin—neat monument—rummage the parchments—*annuity* mama—pair off the girls—marry Kitty—get a ſeat in a certain Houſe—and laugh at Nick Snatch!"

Such

Slender was the attention of Barnwell to the ſilly effuſions of this profligate young man, who was become completely the dupe of a ſet of unprincipled beings, who made him at once their prey, and the object of their ridicule.

Such was the extreme volubility of his companion, that Barnwell's ſilence was unnoticed. They arrived at Mr. Emery's. Mr. Rigby could by no means obtain an audience of any of the family. The ladies were quite *aú deſeſpoir* for the event of to-morrow; Mr. Emery and the Captain were cloſe cloſetted; and therefore, after tormenting Barnwell an hour longer, he retired, and left him to the moſt excrutiating reflections.

CHAP. V.

———No law divine condemns the virtuous
For differing from the rules your ſchools deviſe.
Look round how Providence beſtows, alike,
Sun-ſhine and rain, to bleſs the fruitful year,
On different nations—all of different faiths.

ROWE.

BY a letter, the preceding evening, Mental had requeſted Barnwell to be with him by three o'clock on the morning of the duel. He was punctual to the hour. He found that extraordinary man calm, and more collected in his manner and ſpeech than he had ever beheld him. —There were two packets lying on a table, which he pointed out to Barnwell.

"Uncertain of the events of the next hour," ſaid he, "I have prepared either for death or flight. If I ſhould fall, let

this

this packet be opened immediately after my remains are brought hither: it contains directions for the diſpoſal of my property. If Middleton ſhould fall, and I ſurvive, let *this* be opened the day following my flight: it contains ſome few requeſts, which I perſuade myſelf you will not heſitate to comply with. Now I am ready; and be the iſſue what it may, I am content."

The ſtate of Barnwell's mind was ill adapted to remonſtrate at that time, even could he have imagined remonſtrance of the leaſt avail with ſuch a man as Mental. Much, indeed, he wiſhed to relate to him how far he had himſelf deviated from the paths of rectitude; much he wiſhed to declare the horrors of remorſe, and fears of diſgrace, that tortured his afflicted ſoul; but the ſolemnity of the hour forbid him. He could not diſturb the tranquillity of Mental's boſom at a time, when,

of

of all others, it became him, if poſſible, to increaſe it.

As they were walking towards the field, Mental, gazing round upon the opening beauties of the morning ſcene, ſaid—

"In a little time, probably, this vaſt and wondrous Theatre of Nature will be for ever ſhut to me!—and what ſhall ſucceed it?——Vain enquiry! That ſomething will ſucceed, I *feel*—for nature ſhudders at the idea of total annihilation. Nor is this longing, anxious hope of "living-on," the mere effect of education, as I myſelf once thought. The *various proſpects* of that future may, and doubtleſs do, receive their ſeveral colourings from education;—but the expectation of *ſome hereafter*, ſeems to me, upon mature conſideration of all opinions, and a ſcrupulous inveſtigation of my own thoughts, to be the *only innate idea* of Man,—a univerſal principle implanted by the common Parent,

rent, and influencing, under various forms, the tenants of each quarter of the globe. But beyond this conviction, the powers of *my* mind do not go one ſtep. In England, this futurity is repreſented in one form to our ſenſes; in Turkey, it aſſumes another; in Hindoſtan, another; and among the Africans, another ſtill;—and he who, dwelling under either diſpenſation, is ignorant of any other, feels no difficulty in blending his *belief* of what he *hears* with the *conviction* of what he *feels*. Not ſo the man of more enlightened mind; who, unblinded by prejudice, ſurveys the numerous creeds of various nations. He heſitates, ere he can affix to any little ſpot on earth the *Divine* Revelation of Futurity; and riſing ſuperior to the littleneſs of ſelf, enquires how he may reconcile the Juſtice of Omnipotence with ſo confined a notion.—— Hence, he no longer broods o'er forms and ceremonies; he ceaſes to let down the energies of thought to ſilly ſcrutinies

of

of trivial exteriors; but, unfettering his ſoul from chains of human workmanſhip, gives it bold flight, e'en to the ſtretch of Reaſon. In conſequence, he acts, he ſpeaks, he thinks—deeds, words, and thoughts, truly his own.

" One error generally accompanies this originality of mind, from which I have been far from free—" forgetfulneſs of the general ſtate of mankind,"—which calls for the *ſlow* and *gradual* removal of the veil of prejudices, and on which too ſudden a glare of light muſt neceſſarily produce effects, the very oppoſite to thoſe intended by the benevolence of true philoſophers.

" A deep conſideration of this fact has made me lament having pupliſhed ſome ſtrong truths, which have unſettled many minds from that foundation on which they had reſted, ere any new and more ſolid baſe was formed for their ſupport; and

and has confirmed me ſtrongly in the opinion, that REFORMATION is much better adapted to the purpoſes of philanthropy than the beſt planned REVOLUTION. I feel a relief to my mind, in making this free apology for my own conduct, and ſincere confeſſion of my ſentiments, at this time, moſt probably ſo near my *exit* from theſe ſcenes. And permit me, my young friend, earneſtly to recommend to your remembrance, that, at the cloſing hour of his life, there was nothing ſo anxiouſly employed the thoughts of Mental, as the future effects of thoſe doctrines, which he had promulgated among mankind. May it impreſs upon your mind a caution, which will moſt carefully regulate the propagation of your ſentiments, and even the effuſions of your fancy."

This ſermon (for ſuch the ſolemnity of Mental's manner made it appear) finiſhed, as they were within ſight of the mill.—

They

They had not arrived three minutes before they were joined by Captain Middleton and Mr. Emery. The paces were meaſured, the piſtols loaded, and the antagoniſts took the ground. The ſurpriſe which had made a coward of Middleton had worn away, and he now reſumed that courage for which he was celebrated. —They were to fire together, at a ſignal from Mr. Emery. The word was given —Mental's ball grazed the ſhoulder of Captain Middleton, who fired in the air.

"How is this?" exclaimed Mental;— "why did you fire in the air?"

"Having received your fire, Sir," ſaid the Captain, "I preſume I may now, without the imputation of cowardice, ſolicit your attention for a few minutes to ſome obſervations I would offer. When you have heard me, it ſhall remain for your deciſion, whether this affair ſhall proceed. If it is your wiſh to fire again,

I ſhall

I ſhall think myſelf juſtified in returning it, after the explanation I may offer, and the ſatisfaction I have already afforded by receiving your ball."

"I cannot refuſe to hear you, Sir;—but our ſituation requires you ſhould be brief."

"If I could prove, from the moſt certain evidences," ſaid the Captain, "that your daughter lives————."

"My daughter lives!" exclaimed Mental, ſtarting.——Pſha, pſha, pſha!—I ſaw her die—I ſaw the earth receive her poor remains into it's boſom! Why, then, this paltry evaſion?"

"I am patient," ſaid the Captain, "I bear with the effuſions of your ſorrow—but, believe me, Sir—if the unfortunate girl, whom the madneſs of deſire urged me to ſeduce, and whoſe name was Mental, reſiding

reſiding at Mrs. Orme's—if, Sir, this was your daughter—ſhe ſtill lives—I ſaw her laſt night."

"Saw her laſt night!" echoed Mental, claſping his hands together——"I hope not——No, no—it cannot be——I ſaw her die."

"You muſt have been deceived, Sir, by ſome ſtrong reſemblance of perſon, or ſome ſtriking coincidence of circumſtances—for, by Heaven, I repeat, Miſs Mental lives!"

"Wonderful, wonderful!" ſaid Mental, in a voice barely audible, with his folded hands placed to his eyes.

"After the ſtrong impreſſion of her death, which you have received," ſaid the Captain, "nothing will, perhaps, convince you of her exiſtence, unleſs you were to ſee her."

"See

"See her!—ſee her!" exclaimed Mental, fearfully looking around him——"Is ſhe near me?—I would rather embrace the ſevereſt tortures Cruelty ere framed! —See her!——Horrible!—horrible!"

As he ceaſed, the teeth chattered in his head, and his whole frame was convulſed.—

"Your arm, my friend," continued he, to Barnwell. "I am faint."

He reclined his head on Barnwell's ſhoulder. Mr. Emery then advanced, and propoſed retiring to his houſe, that Captain Middleton might relate the diſcovery of the preceding evening, from which Mr. Mental might draw his own concluſions. He ſubmitted; and by a ſlow walk they arrived there. Mental aſked for a glaſs of water, and, after taking it, requeſted Captain Middleton to proceed.

"It is a very conſiderable time, Sir," ſaid the Captain, "ſince Miſs Mental and myſelf ſeparated—I would, if poſſible, avoid ſhocking your mind; but I am compelled to ſay, that Elinor's infidelity was the cauſe."

"Facts—facts, Sir, if you pleaſe, and ſpare your comments." ſaid Mental.

"Since our ſeparation, I underſtand, ſhe viſited Rome, Florence, and ſeveral of the Italian States, in company with a young nobleman, whom, at length, ſhe left, and ſunk into that way of living—."

"I underſtand, Sir——" interrupted Mental—"Pray, go on."

"From that period, till laſt night, I have remained ignorant of her entirely.—In conſequence of the intended meeting of this morning, I had occaſion for my attorney. Fortunately, I learnt he was

in

in Ramſgate, and he waited on me.—— The cauſe of our meeting, of courſe, was mentioned; when, to my aſtoniſhment, he declared, your daughter was at that moment alive, and in Ramſgate! He cannot be deceived, for he knew her as early as myſelf, and has correſpended with her ever ſince."

"In Ramſgate!" muttered Mental;—"ſo near me, too!"

"Yes," replied the Captain. "She reſides in a ſmall cottage near the ſea, and aſſumes the name of Milwood."

Barnwell turned pale as the dead; his knees ſhook, and his head ſunk upon his breaſt. Mental, almoſt as much affected, had yet more preſence of mind; and ſaid, with particular emphaſis—"*We* muſt enquire into this, and endeavour to *conceal our emotions for the preſent.*"

Barnwell took the hint; and continuing to hold down his head, made every exertion in his power to ſcreen his aſtoniſhment from obſervation.

"Where is this attorney, Sir," ſaid Mental.

"In this houſe," replied the Captain. "Hoping to gain your attention, I requeſted he would be ready to corroborate, by his teſtimony, what I have aſſerted.—I will ſtep for him."

"No, Sir," ſaid Mental; "*I* will examine him in private. Lead me to him."

This manœuvre of Mental's, to prevent the meeting of Blackmore and Barnwell, was truly acceptable to the latter, who would, moſt probably, have been betrayed by the preſence of Blackmore into a premature confeſſion of his connection.

The

The time that Mental was out of the room was occupied by the obſervations of Mr. Emery and Middleton on this diſcovery; whilſt Barnwell's mind was abſorbed in contemplating the conſequences it would produce.

At length Mental returned, and, addreſſing himſelf to Captain Middleton—

"I am convinced," ſaid he, "from the narrative of this man, that ſhe, over whoſe grave I have wept, was not my daughter. I doubt not but ſhe lives.—This diſcovery gives birth to many difficulties, which I muſt overcome; my life, therefore, is neceſſary; and I am thus obliged to relinquiſh, at leaſt for the preſent, any further claim which the laws of honour may allow me." He then beckoned Barnwell, and they left the room together.

CHAP. VI.

" It is of the very eſſence of affection, to ſeek to perpetuate itſelf. He does not love, who can reſign this cheriſhed ſentiment, without ſuffering ſome of the ſharpeſt ſtruggles that our nature is capable of enduring."

" One of the laſt impreſſions a worthy mind can ſubmit to receive, is, that of the worthleſſneſs of the perſon on whom it has fixed all it's eſteem."

Godwin's Memoirs of M. W. Godwin.

MENTAL and Barnwell paſſed the diſtance from Mr. Emery's houſe to the lodgings of the former, in the profoundeſt ſilence. When they entered the room, the ſight of the two packets affected Mental extremely——

" I did not expect to ſee theſe papers again," ſaid he; " but who could have imagined the events of this hour! Who could

could have doubted ſuch appearances?—
—The miſerable being whom I depoſited in the grave, Barnwell, was the friend and companion of Elinor when ſhe reſided in Holborn—her name really Ellen. Thus whilſt I have imagined ſhe had withdrawn from our world, the guilty wretch has been laying ſnares to entangle you.—Oh, my poor brain!"

Overpowered by the ſtrength of his feelings, he ſunk into a chair, and reclined his head on the table. He wept.

"Tears!" exclaimed he. "Well—well!—A few ſtruggles more, and nature muſt yield. But you, oh, ill-fated youth, what muſt be your feelings! The dupe of ſuch conſummate artifice—how muſt your boſom burn with indignation againſt the——againſt my daughter!"

"Oh, Sir!" exclaimed Barnwell, with a heart too full for further utterance.

"Fly to her—" cried Mental: "upbraid her!—heap on her the curſes of a father!"

"Hold—hold!" ſaid Barnwell. "It cannot be—it is impoſſible—that a countenance, which beſpeaks the calm, ſerene felicity of angels, can diſguiſe ſo depraved a heart! There muſt be more Milwoods than one. She, whom I know, cannot be your Elinor. And yet ſuch myſterious ſecreſy—ſuch contradictory narrations—ſuch evidence, too!——Oh, God! if it ſhould be ſo!"

"Poor youth!" cried Mental. "Fain would I comfort you; but when the recollection of the ſource whence flows your miſery darts through my brain—can I reflect upon a proſtituted child—can I contemplate the ruin of innocence I ought to have preſerved, and be calm?"

In

In agony the wretched father ſtamped his feet, and claſped his hands together, with a groan that pierced the heart of Barnwell. Then, with an effort, recovering himſelf—

" But this is woman's weakneſs—this is diſgraceful impotence of mind, thus to be ſtartled at a phantom!—for what more is it? I will ſtill ſuppoſe her dead—ſhe ſhall be as dead to me—ay, and to you, too, youth!" continued he, taking Barnwell by the hand, who had ſhaken his head ſignificantly—" Yes, we muſt each conſole the other, as though each had really followed to the grave the object of his hopes and love. Let us upbraid each other's weakneſs, if a tear gliſten in the eye, or a ſigh eſcape it's priſon of the heart!—there, cloſe captives, let our ſorrows lie; and, though they ſtruggle with a giant's ſtrength to eſcape their bonds, not till the burſting of the heart, in death, be they our conquerors! How ſay

you, boy, can you do this? Or will you crouch before the rod of Fate, ſmart under the diſcipline of fooliſh griefs, and whimper like an infant for a broken toy? ——Come—let us ſwear, never to behold her more!"

"Oh!—Impoſſible—impoſſible!" cried Barnwell. "The love I cheriſh has become the ſource of my exiſtence;—it is woven with life itſelf;—and their duration is coeval. Nor can I—pardon me, Sir—approve your conduct. What if ſhe be fallen as low in infamy as we are told—what if her former life has been a ſcene of vice!——Might not a father's hand, extended, preſerve her from ſtill lower depths of ſin? Is it not poſſible your Elinor might yet become the ſolace of your latter days?"

"What madneſs!" ſaid Mental.—— "Wild infatuation! Do you not know that the loſt being has become a *profeſſor* of

of *iniquity?* 'Tis not a lapſe of human nature ſhould make me thus reſolve.—— Had ſhe ſought theſe arms, when the accurſed ſeducer firſt abandoned her; had ſhe brought to me the heart that he ſpurned from him; think you a man, ſo much above the prejudices of the vulgar, would have diſclaimed her for the weakneſs of her nature? No!—I would have nurſed her penitence in my pitying boſom—I would have healed her wounded heart with a father's beſt affections! But, now ——when the impulſe of her nature is exchanged for the ſordid purpoſes of intereſt; when the affections of her heart are all evaporated, and in their channel flows a ſtream of putrid paſſions—pride, envy, luſt, revenge againſt mankind—what can you imagine would reſult from overtures of reconciliation on my part, but inſolent denials? The delight that ſwells the boſoms of the parent and the child, is virtuous joy! The ſmiles of a father, is bliſs unſpeakable to a virtuous breaſt; but, to

a corrupted heart, is as the ſight of heaven to the fallen angels!"

Barnwell liſtened moſt attentively.

"If, indeed, you are perſuaded," ſaid he, "that ſhe is ſo far abandoned, which I, who have ſo lately ſeen her, cannot allow, yet, even then, admitting ſhe ſpurned all overtures of a father's aid in a return to virtue, would not the thought, that *you had offered it*, afford ſome conſolation?"

Mental ſtarted, and pauſed a conſiderable time."

"No, no—it muſt not be," cried he. "Your ſuggeſtion ſtruck me for the moment; but, upon conſideration, I am convinced it would prove a fruitleſs offer, and only add to her deſpair."

"Still you argue," ſaid Barnwell, "on the ground, that ſhe is irreparably loſt.

If

If you could ſee her—if you but heard her ſentiments——."

"Deception is her trade," cried Mental. "But, yet, I am half inclined to ſee her."

"Oh, do!" cried Barnwell, with quickneſs.

"If I were ſure ſhe would not know me—and ſo little reſemblance to the portrait do I now bear, that, I think, it is impoſſible ſhe could—I would ſee her."

"Obey this impulſe, Sir;—it is the voice of nature; and I will hope the happieſt effects. She muſt, ſhe ſhall, prove virtuous yet; for 'tis in vain to talk of tearing from your heart her lovely image!"

"Softly, youth." cried Mental. "Let, not paſſion bear away remembrance. Grant that we ſucceeded to our utmoſt hopes;

hopes; what would follow,—but that ſhe ſhould forſake the throngs of ſociety, and in the ſolitude of retirement calm the tumultuous ſea of paſſions that rages in her boſom. You do not, ſurely, for a moment, Barnwell, think of renewing a connection with a common proſtitute!"

"Do I hear you, Sir!" cried Barnwell, his cheeks tinged with a roſy glow, his breaſt heaving with the impetuoſity of youthful paſſion—"Was it Mr. Mental that I heard? Impoſſible! 'Twas the croaking voice of Prejudice, that blended the ſuppoſition of returning virtue and a hiding-place together. A Monk could not preach otherwiſe, indeed! But I diſdain the notion. Oh, were Milwood virtuous *now*, not all the ſcreams and howlings of a wondering world ſhould fright me from her arms!"

"Youth," cried Mental, with an expreſſive gaze—"Youth, I admire, and tremble

tremble—— Hear my determination:—The attorney Blackmore is completely in my power;—ſome practices, of which he was guilty in the affairs of Norris, would tranſport him. On his lips, therefore, I have a ſeal. My daughter is ignorant of the duel, and it's cauſes; ſhe will remain ſo. Could it, then, be contrived to admit me, for a day or two, as a friend of your's, into her company—by which means I might judge of her for myſelf, and act accordingly?"

"Nothing more eaſy," ſaid Barnwell. "You might, for a few days, occupy a room in the cottage. 'Tis an excellent thought; and I cheriſh the ſtrongeſt hopes of it's ſucceſs."

After ſeveral obſtacles were removed, this plan was reſolved on, and Barnwell went to prepare for it's execution.

Milwood

Milwood had ſcarcely riſen, when Barnwell entered the cottage. Surpriſed at ſo early a viſit, the firſt thought that occured to her was, that the forgery had been already detected, though Blackmore, in whoſe hands ſhe placed the note, had declared he would not negociate it for at leaſt a month; in which period ſhe propoſed the concluſion of her ſchemes on Barnwell. She was agreeably diſappointed, therefore, when he acquainted her with the nature of his errand; deſcribing Mental as an old gentleman from whom he had conſiderable expectations, who wiſhed to reſide ſome time at Ramſgate incog. It was ſettled, that a bed ſhould be prepared for him by the evening. Influenced, as it was, by contending emotions, Barnwell's behaviour did not eſcape the penetration of Milwood.—

"Are you unwell, Barnwell?" ſaid ſhe.

"No,"

"No," replied he:

"Your mind is uneaſy then?"

"What ſhould make it ſo? Do I not poſſeſs your love—your whole heart? —Milwood, you never loved another as you love me!"

"Never. But why that queſtion?"

"There are others of the name of Milwood in the world, I ſhould ſuppoſe; or elſe calumny has been buſy with your's!"

"Who dare calumniate my character?" and ſhe bluſhed deeply.

"Nay, I did not ſay 'twas your's. But my friend, whom you will ſee to-night, ſoon as I mentioned the name of Milwood, and expreſſed to him (for he is my ſecond ſelf) the nature of our connection, ſtarted;

ed; and then detailed ſome tales that he had heard of *one* Milwood. But they could not relate to you."——

"'Twas not kind, Sir, to refuſe my poor requeſt of ſecreſy for a few more days; but to convince you how ſuperior I feel to any tale of calumny, I am glad you friend is coming. He will not ſcruple to repeat it, I ſhould hope."

"I never knew him ſhrink from his own act."

Enough had paſſed to convince Milwood ſhe was ſuſpected. When, therefore, Barnwell prepared to take leave, ſhe made no attempt to detain him; but immediately after his departure went in ſearch of Blackmore, and challenged him with treachery: he, from a dread of Mental, perſiſted to the contrary; and declared, that he had not uttered a ſyllable concerning her. Deſtitute of any other ground

of

of ſuſpicion, ſhe now turned her thoughts again towards this ſtranger, and prepared herſelf for a detection. Summoning to her aid all the powers ſhe poſſeſſed, ſhe waited with conſiderable anxiety his arrival.

CHAP. VII.

So farewel, Hope—and with Hope, farewel Fear;
Farewel, Remorſe; all Good to me is loſt;—
Evil, be thou my Good!———

MILTON.

THE mind of Barnwell began now to aſſume a caſt, which juſtly to delineate is beyond the beſt efforts of the moſt brilliant powers of deſcription. The rapid progreſs of intereſting events, in which he had been chief actor, ſeemed now to have attained their climax. Left to his own reflections for a time, the conſequences of that morning's diſcovery paſſed in a dreadful ſucceſſion before his imagination.

"Milwood!"—would he murmur—"Milwood!—Myſterious being! I am loſt in

in unravelling her actions! What but love can have impelled her to ſuch a ſeries of impoſtures?——A proſtitute!——is not the end of ſuch loſt women,—Gain—Subſiſtence? Has ſuch been Milwood's?—Have I not offered her my hand—Might ſhe not have been my wife, with half the efforts that it has coſt her to procure five hundred pounds? Beſides, has ſhe not ſhared the crime,—and conſequent hazard of detection and death? Had ſhe, when ſhe obtained that ſum, fled from the reach of juſtice, I could at once decide upon her motives. But, no.——Jewels, which ſhe imagined worth more than that ſum, were in her poſſeſſion;—theſe ſhe parted with:——for what?—To purchaſe a releaſe from her huſband!—Has ſhe, then, a huſband? If not, why pretend ſo? Then, her uncle! If ſhe is, indeed, Mental's daughter, ſhe can have no uncle. Blackmore, too!—the creature of Middleton! He, it ſeems, is the diſcoverer of this loſt daughter; and

he

he finds her—in Milwood—whoſe huſband, he pretended, was his client! By heaven, 'tis a conſpiracy—a juggle!—— But how to detect it? To-night's interview will probably throw ſome light on this myſterious buſineſs; but to me, it ſeems impoſſible ſhe can be Mental's daughter!"

To theſe reflections ſucceeded others, reſpecting that dreadful act to which the ſyren had urged him.—

—"Forgery!" exclaimed he to himſelf. "Who, I—I commit a forgery!—Spirit of my father, did you ſee the deed?—Where is the fatal paper? Perhaps, ere this, detected, traced!—And *who*, cries an enquiring world, *who* was the villain?—Horrible, horrible!—— Three hundred pounds may yet redeem it. I'll inſtantly aſk it of Mr. Emery. Why do I heſitate?—My embarraſſment will betray me.—Shall I, then, acknowledge to him, in time,

time, what I have done? Coward, that I am,—my heart ſinks at the idea! The The diſtreſſes of Mental, at this moment, render it cruelty to obtrude another's miſeries upon him.——My uncle!—my mother!——Gracious God! it would be parricide to let them know that I am ſuch a villain!"

In the moſt diſtracted ſtate of mind he paſſed the remainder of the day; ſeeking every opportunity of ſolitude, dreading the glance of every eye, ſtarting at every footſtep; retracing, with an aching heart, the paſt, and contemplating the future, almoſt with deſpair!

Evening arrived. He repaired to Mental, who awaited his call to accompany him to Milwood's cottage, having diſguiſed himſelf in the habit of an Hanoverian, in which he had formerly travelled.

"Now

"Now for an effort, young friend," ſaid he. "But, methinks, you do not brave this warfare of the paſſions with the fortitude that becomes you:—your brow is marked with grief; your eye lowers, and you ſigh! Come, come—be more yourſelf! One interview, moſt probably, will announce the future deſtinies of us both. I tremble for myſelf; and yet I fain would act the hero, for your example. Should ſhe reſemble her mother!——But, come—the evening is advanced.

Barnwell bowed in ſilence, and they ſet forward for the cottage.

In the mean time Milwood had not been idle. Every channel of enquiry had been drained. Blackmore had been entreated, and threatened, in vain; he had diſcloſed nothing, and the reſult of all her induſtry was vague uncertainty, as to the expected ſtranger. She did not fail, however,

however, to make ſuch preparations as might evince to Barnwell her deſire to pleaſe. The entertainment ſhe provided for his friend was deficient in nothing that her ſituation permitted her to procure.

Mental and Barnwell arrived. She ſaw them open a wicket gate, at the entrance of a gravel walk that led to the cottage door. She placed herſelf to receive them. Mental ſtarted at the threſhold, and retired a pace or two--It *was* his daughter that he beheld; and in *her* he ſaw her unfortunate mother! To ſcreen his confuſion, Barnwell attracted the attention of Milwood, by ſaying——" This is Mr. Townley, whom I mentioned this morning. Circumſtances rendering a temporary concealment neceſſary, he has choſen this diſguiſe to enſure it." Milwood, having ſurveyed the ſtranger circumſpectly, ſaid—" As the friend of my Barnwell, Sir, you are welcome: acquaint-

ance, I doubt not, will teach me to reſpect you on your own account."

Mental bowed, and, in a faltering voice, replied——" I am a plain man, Madam, and too much out of humour with my own deſtiny to accommodate my muſcles to a ſmile of gallantry; but, I thank you; and, rough as my manners may appear to you, I ſhall not be *an inſenſible obſerver of your actions*. My young friend has, I preſume, acquainted you with my cuſtoms, which to you may wear the ſemblance of capricious whims; but, 'twas upon the aſſurance of your compliance with them I trouble you with my company for a day or two.

" In the firſt place, I muſt entreat you to forbear all thoſe obtruſive attentions, called civility, or politeneſs. I can't bear teazing; my nerves are irritable. Thus, if I chooſe to ſpend my day in my chamber, you will not be rapping at my door, with

with ſilly importunities to ſee your garden, or to walk, or ride, thinking that I am too much alone; and ſuch frivolity. I hate it. Again, if ſome times a ſtrange ejaculation paſs my lips, don't lift your hands and eyes to heaven with ſtupid admiration; nor cry—'Sir!—what did you ſay?' In ſhort, however I may demean myſelf, be this your rule—that as I have capacity and will, ſo let that will be free. Now, by your leave, I'll to my bed at once."

"We muſt, in all reſpects, comply with my friend's wiſhes; and cannot better ſhew our willingneſs to pleaſe, than by forbearance to expreſs as much," ſaid Barnwell.

"'Tis an early hour to retire," ſaid Milwood; "but, knowing your inclination, I willingly comply."

Barnwell conducted him to a ſmall chamber. Mental graſped his hand—— "We muſt not talk," ſaid he, in a whiſper. "My pen ſhall do the office of my tongue. Stay not here to night. Suffice it, for the preſent,—*That I have ſeen my daughter!*—Go, or we ſhall awake ſuſpicion. In the morning be here, and I will contrive to ſlip into your hand, unnoticed, my written obſervations. Farewel—Be reſolute." Upon his return to Milwood, ſhe overwhelmed him with queſtions reſpecting the ſtranger: and Barnwell was compelled to perſevere in falſehoods. Among other queſtions which ſhe put to him—"Is he rich?" ſaid ſhe.

"Very rich," ſaid Barnwell.

"And who are his heirs?"

"He has none; nor, at preſent, any friend but me."

"Then

"Then you would, moſt probably, inherit all his wealth, were he to die."

"Diſtant, far diſtant, be the day of his death!" cried Barnwell; "though ten times his wealth ſhould be mine at that period."

Milwood pondered a moment; and her expreſſive eyes proclaimed ſome mighty purpoſe was juſt then generated in her brain. Barnwell obſerved it not. She made no effort to detain him, when he took his leave, but ſuffered him to depart, with the promiſe of an early viſit in the morning. The inſtant he was gone, ſhe diſmiſſed her maid for the evening; and, ſhutting herſelf in her chamber, committed the offspring of her mind to paper, in the form of a letter to the Chevalier Zelotti, an Italian, whom ſhe met at Bologna. It is neceſſary to obſerve, that this Italian was the wretch who had put the finiſhing touches to the character of

Milwood, whoſe real hiſtory this is the proper period for diſcloſing.

It is unneceſſary to retrace the ſubject farther back than her elopement, from Mrs. Orme's academy, with Captain Middleton. At that epoch ſhe poſſeſſed all the levity of youth, uncontrouled by principles of any ſolidity. Eſtranged from her parents, ſhe felt for them, or their memory, no regard. Her heart wanted an attachment, and Captain Middleton, aided by the infamous Maſters, accompliſhed her ruin with eaſe.

Her reſidence, whilſt ſhe continued with Middleton, was principally at Tunbridge Wells; where, growing ſatiated with his object, Middleton deſerted her. She flew to Mrs. Maſters, and, having made her election for her future courſe of life, that woman inſtructed her in many of the arts neceſſary for the profeſſion ſhe had choſen.

'Twas

'Twas at this period ſhe formed an acquaintance with the ſon of the Earl of——, and accompanied him, through the connivance of his tutor, in a tour to ſeveral of the courts of Europe. During the period of this connection, ſhe had ample opportunities of obſerving the amazing diſparity of doctrines and practice among the clergy of the church of Rome; a circumſtance that unhappily rivetted that diſguſt ſhe had cheriſhed for religion in general.

At Bologna the young nobleman, her patron, continued a conſiderable time, in conſequence of numerous recommendations to the nobility there, ſeveral of whom were allied to the maternal branches of his family. Here it was that the Chevalier Zelotti firſt preſented himſelf to Milwood. She conceived a violent attachment to his perſon, almoſt at firſt ſight, and a ſhort acquaintance gave birth to a reciprocation of paſſion.

Intrigue, in Italy, is one of the buſineſſes of life; and the ſimilarity of unſhackled ſentiment ſoon removed every obſtacle to the gratification of their deſires. The ſame contempt for the laws which govern ſociety, the ſame ridicule of ſcruples under the name of prejudices, the ſame unlimited gratification of their own wills, actuated Zelotti and Milwood. The mind of Milwood was ſtrong and maſculine; but Zelotti, in addition to natural ſtrength of intellect, poſſeſſed the advantage of experience; having received a Monkiſh education; having paſſed ſome years in the army; and having been employed as private ſecretary to a nobleman, who was ſome time ambaſſador at Venice.

When Milwood was obliged either to accompany the young dupe of her charms to England, or diſcover her infidelity, and remain with Zelotti, it was agreed in conſultation to prefer the former, under an

an engagement from Zelotti to viſit her in England, as ſoon as his finances enabled him. They ſeparated, but their correſpondence had ever ſince remained unbroken.

The Earl of ——— died ſoon after the return of his ſon from the Continent, who, ſucceeding to the title and eſtate, diſmiſſed his former connections, and ſhortly after married.

At this period Milwood became diſtreſſed, and was compelled, for a time, to accept the friendly offers of the unhappy Ellen, whoſe acquaintance ſhe had accidentally acquired; and being ſeized with a lingering illneſs, was almoſt reduced to want. Then it was that the portrait of her father was diſpoſed of by her friend, which circumſtance led Mental to the concluſion of her death.

In the mean time, Zelotti had ſo well played his game in Italy, that he married the dowager of a Florentine merchant, of immenſe property, with whom he reſided a ſhort period; and then, by the aid of poiſon, diſencumbered the poſſeſſions ſhe brought him from their unwelcome clog. —He had, however, exchanged his paſſion for Milwood for a new face, which preſented itſelf in the perſon of a native of Florence, of mean extraction, who willingly accompanied a man of his wealth to England.

Their letters mutually acquainted them with each other's ſituation, and the utmoſt freedom was uſed by both. Milwood did not diſdain to accept the pecuniary aſſiſtance ſhe wanted, and the liberality of Zelotti raiſed her from diſtreſs.—Her indiſpoſition was of the moſt lingering nature; and ſhe paſſed many months without the hope of recovery.

During

During the whole of this period ſhe reſided at Southampton, with Zelotti and his miſtreſs; and, if the word is not diſhonoured by the uſe, they lived in habits of unbounded friendſhip, without the return of paſſion. As the health of Milwood returned, however, her charms once more appeared, and thoſe deſires revived ſtrongly in her boſom, which ſhe had never aimed to controul.

In this criſis of her hiſtory ſhe learnt from Zelotti the character of Mr. Emery, who was then at Southampton, and had actually reſolved upon a conqueſt there; when, from the ſame ſource, ſhe gathered the intelligence of Barnwell's innocence and inexperience, and without a moment's heſitation changed her intention.—The ſucceſs of her attempts are thus far known. The letter to Zelotti runs thus:

"He is this inſtant gone.—The ſtranger, I mentioned in my laſt letter,

ſleeps at this moment in the room above that in which I now write. He appears an original. If his hiſtory is to be obtained, you know me too well to doubt my induſtry. He is rich, Zelotti—very rich; and Barnwell, to a certainty, his inheritor.

"What idea aſſociates itſelf with this information in *your* brain? When we firſt ſketched the outlines of our plan, at Southampton, Sir James Barnwell's death, you recollect, was decided. Would not old Townley's wealth buy the ſame pleaſures as old Barnwell's? The one is in our power:—a ſimple infuſion in his drink would ſend him quietly away, and yield us all we wiſh.

"To accompliſh our original deſign, I begin to think a work of greater labour than we imagined it. The expence and plans we have already encountered have not been trifling. Blackmore's charges

for

for the buſineſs at Brompton are enormous; and hitherto we have received, in return, nothing. The forged acceptance for five hundred has coſt us three, and can only be uſed as an incentive to that act, from which the fruits of all our labours are to reſult. Should the young ſinner diſappoint us there, a *very fruitful* enterprize it will prove!

"Zelotti, I have ever held thee a maſter in thine art; but, really, the arrangements in this affair add nothing to thy fame!—the jewel ſcheme excepted (for which I thank you):—the other branches of your plan I have been ſo frequently compelled to alter, that, intoxicated with paſſion as Barnwell is, I wonder at the blindneſs, which has not, more than once, detected contradictions abſolutely glaring. ——Here is an opportunity of retrieving your eminence, in my opinion. Exert it, man.

"There

"There is a ſort of lethargy, I have obſerved of late, from your epiſtles, has ſeized thee, my Zelotti. Arouſe thoſe drowſy faculties the hand of nature ſo profuſely has beſtowed. Look round thee, man, and mark the eager zeal with which the plodding dupes of laws and ſyſtems run in their limited purſuits; their courſe hedged in on either hand by rules and cuſtoms, and bounded by a cowardice of conſcience. Yet howmany of this deſcription are there, who amaſs wealth, gain honor, and are borne upon the ſhoulders of the crowd! What, then, ſhould be their lofty daring, who own no law but prudence, and laugh at the Nonentity, called Conſcience, which ſcares the multitude?

"Think on this, Zelotti; and ſay, if this old Townley muſt not be diſmiſſed from the ſcenes of men?—Deviſe ſome ſafe and certain means of doing this, and of enſuring to ourſelves the advantage of his death.

"Good

"Good night.—I ſeek my pillow;—and in my dreams I ſhall doubtleſs view bones, that are '*marrowleſs*,' ſtalk round my chamber; eyes glare at me, in which there is 'no luſtre;' and bloody hands, that draw the curtain of my bed!——But—I ſhall wake—and know '*'tis but a dream.*' ——Good night, once more, Zelotti, ſays your

"ELINOR."

CHAP. VIII.

Swift is the flight of wealth—unnumber'd wants,
Brood of volupt'ouſneſs, cry out aloud
Neceſſity.———————

DYER.

AT the reſidence of Mr. Emery a general joy diſplayed itſelf for the ſafety of the Captain; and Barnwell was tormented with queſtions concerning the old Quiz, as Mental was denominated by the young ladies. Mrs. Emery herſelf ſummoned him to her dreſſing-room, and tortured him with an hour's converſation on that ſubject; and on another which occaſioned him much pain.—

"And ſo," ſaid ſhe, "the brute won't ſee his *creature* of a daughter, though he made

made ſuch a *fuſs* about her, and abſolutely frightened one to death with his challenge!——Well,—let's hear no more of the wretch!——But, my dear Barnwell," continued ſhe, "I have another and much more important affair to mention to you—an affair of the heart! I ſhall be as candid as poſſibly one can on a ſubject of ſuch exceſſive delicacy; and I am amazingly much deceived, if I do not meet in a mind like your's, *ſuſceptible of tender impreſſions*, and alive to *thoſe delicate ſenſations*, as I may ſay——that is—I mean *ſenſibility!—ſoftneſs of ſoul!*—and *all that!*—You underſtand me."

"Madam!" ſaid Barnwell, bluſhing deeply.

The lady reclining her head, and playing with her fan, continued.—"I ſay—that is, it is unneceſſary to ſay—but in the preſent ſtate of ſociety, when marriages are entered into, without a conſultation of that

that *congeniality* of *ſentiments*; and people are thrown together, as it were, like blanks and prizes in a lottery ——Why —it cannot be wondered at, that affection ſhould not always follow—where parents or guardians——Heigho!—It's exceſſively warm," (fanning herſelf)—" Do, pray, throw that door open."

It was her chamber door. Barnwell obeyed, and was retiring.

" Stay, Sir,—I—I——Pray, Mr. Barnwell, can you conceive what can poſſibly engage Mr. Emery ſo perpetually from home?"

" No, Madam. I——."

" Not that I deem it a misfortune—he is ſo moroſe in his manners of late—— that, though I never did, to be ſure, love the man,—yet one would contrive to keep up appearances. But really, of late—he has

has become ſo indifferent, that one's lot is deplorable;—and—."

This lady of faſhion now began to develope her intentions ſo openly, that Barnwell, whoſe ſoul revolted with diſguſt at the diſcovery, would certainly have betrayed that diſguſt, but for a melancholy interruption, which diſcloſed a paſſion of a purer nature.—The love-ſick Maria had been permitted to ſit up that afternoon, as the violence of her fever was abated, though ſucceeded by a melancholy of the moſt painfully intereſting nature.

She had expreſſed a wiſh to ſee Mrs. Emery, and her attendant accompanied her to the dreſſing-room. Her eyes were fixed on the floor, as ſhe entered, leaning on the arm of her attendant. She did not perceive Barnwell——

"If

"If you know he is very wicked, my dear Mrs. Emery," ſaid ſhe, "you ought to tell me; for how ſhould I have gueſſed at ſuch a thing—when his countenance was ſo full of goodneſs?—What a deceiver he muſt be! But don't you think he will grow tired of ſuch bad ways?—Poor young man!—Well—well—all is for the beſt!"

Mrs. Emery, burſting with anger and vexation at the interruption, was yet compelled to diſſemble.

Barnwell, heſitating whether to go, or ſtay, was pierced to the heart at the ſight of the lovely mourner. At the intimation of her nurſe, he concealed himſelf behind the door, as ſhe muſt have ſeen him had he retired.

"My good girl," ſaid Mrs. Emery, "why do you leave your room?"

"Oh,"

"Oh," replied ſhe, "I was ſo uneaſy, you can't think; for I can't help loving him:—and then, you know, theſe wicked women have ſuch arts to enſnare poor youth! And if any harm were to happen to him—why, then——Mrs. Emery, my poor head aches ſo very much, it makes me forget all that I was going to ſay. But, ſuppoſe I was to talk to him—only for his own good!—He would liſten to me.——I am very faint—and very ill—But he is well——that's a great happineſs, to know he is well! I had ſomething to aſk you, but my poor head grows quite forgetful—So let us go, Nurſe—and we will pray for him—come, we will pray for him!"

"Unfortunate girl!" exclaimed Mrs. Emery, when Maria had retired.

"I am loſt in amazement!" interrupted Barnwell. "To what can the dear ſufferer allude?"

At

At that moment the trampling of horſes in the court-yard announced the arrival of Mr. Freeman, who was expected, in conſequence of the ill ſtate of Miſs Freeman's health.

Diſguſted at the conduct of Mrs. Emery, and at the ſame moment filled with compaſſion for the amiable Maria, Barnwell met the reſpectable and worthy Mr. Freeman.

"This, then, is the end of my parting with her! Why did I truſt the ſtaff of my old age from my ſight! Shew me to my child!"

In vain Mrs. Emery and her daughters urged the impropriety, and even danger, of the interview. The fond, afflicted father was deaf to reaſon, and would ſuffer no arguments to prevent him from embracing the object of all his love.—— Maria ſhrieked at the ſight of him—ran

to

to his arms, and buried her face in his boſom. A fainting fit ſucceeded, in which, except for ſhort intervals, ſhe remained the whole night. The venerable old man would not quit the bed-ſide, but perſonally adminiſtered her medicines, and watched her countenance with unwearied attention.

Another event, of the ſame evening, occaſioned Barnwell freſh food for conjecture, and ſome uneaſineſs. He had retired at the uſual hour, and upon entering the breakfaſt room, the next morning, was ſurpriſed to find it empty. In a few minutes his ſurpriſe was increaſed, by the entrance of Mr. Rigby, in a pair of red ſlippers, his hair undreſſed, and his whole appearance indicating that he had ſlept in the houſe——

—"There, my boy, as good as a prophet!" cried he, before Barnwell had recovered himſelf——"Knew it was upon the

the totter!—Saw it going—going—and now it's *gone!*"

"Sir!" ſaid Barnwell.

"Tell you all about it. I was at Margate—charming aſſembly—fine girls—ſix belles to a beau—gives one conſequence—didn't chuſe to dance—a hundred ogling me—kept up my dignity—ſtrutted about the rooms—lounged among the card folks—flattered the old dowagers, and made them throw away their aces."

"But what is all this?" ſaid Barnwell.

"Coming to the point.—As I ſtood leaning, in a pick-tooth attitude, upon old Lady Snowdrop's chair, very attentive to a trick in diamonds, we were all frightened out of our wits by a ſudden exclamation of—"D-mn----n!!"—as loud as the echo of Aſhley's double drums! I knew the voice—'Twas Emery's—Every body

body was up—the cards were mixed—candles thrown down—and the whole room in complete conſternation!——The tremendous word, that occaſioned ſuch an effect, was but the overture to the piece that ſucceeded; in which Emery, Middleton, a Captain of the Guards, and the *dear darling* of an eminent diſtiller, were performers, both vocal and inſtrumental, their vociferations of abuſe being accompanied by the jarring of pokers, candleſticks, and chairs!"—

"Proceed, Sir," cried Barnwell: "if under all this embelliſhment there is any matter of fact——————."

"Oh, *excuſez moi*, my dear fellow—*truth*, to a word, on my honour. The antagoniſts were at length parted—the cauſe of diſpute was *blown—foul play*—The diſtiller's ſon had detected Middleton, at a time when ſome thouſands were againſt the former. Emery was charged as an

accomplice. Swords and piſtols followed of courſe, and an immediate meeting was agreed on. Emery ſaw me, and entreated me to break the affair at home; and thus ends the firſt part of the chapter of accidents."

"Are you in earneſt, Mr. Rigby?" ſaid Barnwell: "really in earneſt; *ſerious* I don't expect *you* to be."

"*Real right earneſt*, upon my honor."

"And where is Mr. Emery? Is he ſafe?"

"*Excuſez moi*—can't ſay——Drove to town like furies—Juſtices had took the alarm, and would ſuffer no meeting at Margate——'Twas quite a blaze—the whole town in an uproar."

"The event is uncertain, then?" cried Barnwell.

"Quite

"Quite ſo. A *hit* or a *miſs*, that's the hazard."

"And Mrs. Emery and the ladies—"

"Have cried, and fainted, and gone to ſleep."

"Good God! what indifference about the life of a fellow-creature!" ſaid Barnwell; and, burſting in anger from Rigby, learned from the ſervants that the moſt material part of his narrative was too true. —The ladies, in anxious expectation of tidings, remained in their rooms—whilſt Lord Morley and Mr. Eaſtwood had gone poſt to London.

The moſt ſcrupulous care was taken to prevent a breath of this intelligence reaching the ears of Mr. Freeman, who ſtill kept watch by the bed-ſide of his daughter. All Ramſgate, however, rung with the ſtory, coloured and improved by

every retailer. Reports flew thick and faſt. The houſe was beſet with enquirers; and Barnwell, fully occupied with attending Mrs. Emery and her daughters, and anſwering the *politely* curious inquiſitors, found it would be impoſſible to ſee Mental or Milwood that day, and therefore diſpatched a note, announcing the event.

From the anſwer of Mental, he learned, that he had entered into a converſation with his daughter that morning, in which, as Mental expreſſed it, "he had diſcovered ſhe poſſeſſed a vigorous mind, a quick fancy, and ſome acquired knowledge; but when I gazed on her countenance," continued he, "my memory roſe in war againſt me; the image of her murdered mother ſtood before me, and I was compelled to fly the viſion. I have ſhut myſelf up in my chamber; I have reaſoned with the inward chidings of my ſoul; I have ſtruggled to obtain acquittal of myſelf, and found that ſtruggle hard. When

late

late I ſtood upon the grave's brink, I was leſs ſhaken. I felt no pangs for an irretrievable act of homicide;—but the reſemblance grew upon me, faſtened on my mind, and conjured up the thouſand vain regrets I thought for ever burried. Thoſe gloomy thoughts, which I oft indulged at the ſtill midnight hour in the old Abbey's aiſle, now beſet me, and attract the mind from more uſeful occupation. Something we muſt determine ſoon reſpecting this loſt woman!——* * * *

could not have arrived at a more intereſting period. Say, I expect him moſt impatiently. Adieu.'

" From the window of my chamber, I ſee her attend a perſon, in a travelling habit, along the gravel walk to the wicket. Who is this Zelotti?—Come to me as ſoon as poſſible—Our ſituation becomes intereſting.

" MENTAL."

Such was the concluſion of the letter Barnwell received from the Cottage.

Many hours of anxiety were endured by Barnwell ere any certain intelligence was received concerning Mr. Emery. About ten at night Lord Morley and Mr. Eaſtwood returned.

Mr. Emery had received a very ſevere wound in the head, and the ball was not extracted at their departure from Portland

land Place. Captain Middleton had dangerouſly wounded his antagoniſt, and had ſet off immediately for Hamburgh.

To conceal the danger of Mr. Emery's ſituation from his family, it was ſettled that they ſhould continue for the preſent at Ramſgate, and be merely informed, that a meeting had taken place, and Mr. Emery ſlightly wounded, but forbid to travel for a day or two, when he would return to them.

About noon the following day a poſt-chaiſe and four drove into the court-yard, and Mr. Drudge, the acting partner in the concern of Freeman, Emery, and Co. was in a few ſeconds in the hall. Barnwell received him.—

——" Mr. Freeman!—Mr. Freeman!—Where's Mr. Freeman?——Let me ſee Mr. Freeman," exclaimed Mr. Drudge.

The rattling of the chaiſe, the loud talking of Mr. Drudge, and the buſtle of the ſervants, alarmed the whole family, who, with Mr. Freeman himſelf, were immediately aſſembled, to enquire the occaſion of ſuch a noiſe. Soon as Mr. Drudge ſaw Mr. Freeman, he ran to him, and graſping his hand ——

" Oh, Sir!—prepare yourſelf—prepare yourſelf——ſuch tidings!—ſuch diſcoveries!—Good God!"

Mr. Freeman trembled—Mrs. Emery and the ladies almoſt fainted—whilſt Lord Morley and Mr. Eaſtwood ſtood motionleſs, with a ſtupid ſtare of vacancy.

" Is Mr. Emery dead?" exclaimed Barnwell.

" Oh, worſe, worſe than death——He is a—ruined man!—and much I fear his ruin will extend to more than him. Oh, my

my dear Sir, when I think what *you* muſt feel!"——ſtill graſping Mr. Freeman's hand——.

"Ruin!—ruin!" exclaimed the worthy Mr. Freeman; and, placing his hand to his forehead, cried—"Strengthen me, good Heaven!"

Lord Morley and Mr. Eaſtwood gaped at each other, and the reſt of the company; and the latter, at length, propoſed taking the ladies into another room, whilſt Mr. Drudge explained to Mr. Freeman. Barnwell remained.

"Where is Emery?" cried Mr. Freeman.

It now became neceſſary to acquaint him with the affair at Margate; and Mr. Drudge added—

—" The report of ſuch conduct ſoon buzzed about London, and no leſs than ten arreſts were that morning iſſued againſt him; and notwithſtanding the poor man is abſolutely delirious, from his wound, he has been removed to a ſpunging-houſe. In the houſe at Portland Place there are already four executions; as many in Broad Street, and at the Pavilion. Demands upon demands, to ſuch amounts that aſtoniſh me, flock ſo faſt one after another, that to procure bail is impoſſible; and reparation ſeems beyond the reach of human hands."

Such was Mr. Drudge's unvarniſhed tale; and it's effect upon the mind of Mr. Freeman may be conceived, but cannot be expreſſed.

" For *this* have I nouriſhed thee—thou Ingrate!" exclaimed Mr. Freeman.——" Villain!—hypocrite!—ſmiling, ſyſtematic villain!!———What muſt be done?

You,

You, too, honeſt man, the ſweat of whoſe brows have furniſhed this monſter with luxuries—you, too, muſt be involved in his ruin!"

"To be ſure I muſt ſuffer—my wife and children muſt ſuffer!" ſaid Mr. Drudge. "But, oh, Sir, *I* am a young man yet; but *you*, you, Sir—who have grown old in the reſpect of the world, and have acquired a right to the comforts of age—*you*, Sir, muſt be a ſufferer, indeed!—Your amiable daughter, too—."

"Hold, hold, hold!" cried Freeman: —"*there* you touch my ſoul! But how can he ſo long have deceived us both?"

"Alas! Sir, *I* have long ſuſpected when balance after balance has been againſt us; but he was ſo ready with ſpecious excuſes. At one time he pretended money was locked up in the hands of government; at another, ſpeculations

of the boldeſt nature in the funds; and as they had all your ſanction——."

"*My* ſanction!—I never dreamt of ſuch proceedings. Month after-month he remitted to me ſtatements of the concerns, that ſhewed an *increaſing*, very increaſing, balance in our favour."

"Good God, what villainy!—Sir, he has repeatedly, again and again, aſſured me you knew the facts, and approved them; whilſt, at the ſame moment, he muſt have been remitting for your inſpection, ſtatements of his own fabrication."

"Can human nature be ſo baſe!" ſaid Mr. Freeman. "But what can be done? How are we to learn the amount of debts againſt us?"

"A meeting muſt be inſtantly called," ſaid Mr. Drudge.

"Oh,

"Oh, juſt Heaven, help me to ſupport it!—At my time of life, muſt I, after having ſo many years enjoyed the good opinion of my brother merchants, muſt I now be reduced to ſtand downcaſt before my creditors, and own myſelf connected with a ſwindler? How ſhall I bear it!"—[Tears actually rolled down his cheeks.]—"Had he buried a dagger in my heart, it had been mercy, to a deed like this!"

Barnwell, who trembled for the effects of this *ſtoppage* upon his own crime, was ſcarcely able to ſpeak; yet the tears of ſuch a man as Mr. Freeman rouſed him to attempt ſomething like conſolation.

"Not on you, Sir," ſaid he; "not on you will diſgrace fall, whoſe actions—."

"The world, in theſe caſes, ſeldom diſcriminates, young man. What will my tenants, my neighbours, ſay, when my houſe, my lands, my very furniture,

is lotted out for ſale, to pay my creditors, perhaps, a fourth, an eighth, of their juſt debts?—And you, too, my Maria—poor dear girl!"—[He dropped on his knees.] "Take her—take her, gracious God, to thine own kingdom! Let her not riſe from the bed of ſickneſs to a beggar's lot!"

A conſiderable time paſſed before this injured merchant could, with any compoſure, diſcuſs what ſteps ſhould be adopted. At length it was agreed to ſummon a meeting of their creditors. When this was arranged,——

"There is one circumſtance more, which I think I had better mention, leaſt you hear it by ſome other channel:—— The connections of Mr. Emery have, lately, been of the worſt kind imaginable. To ſome gamblers he was in the habit of giving bills for large ſums payable by the firm. Among ſeveral others, I was ſhewn one, for five hundred pounds, which

which a jew broker had *diſcounted*, as he termed it, and which I am certain is a FORGERY, It wants ſome time of being due. Now, in all probability, this is not the only one."

Like lightening, the word FORGERY ſtruck the brain of Barnwell.——" I am ill," cried he, and ruſhed out of the room. In the hall he ſtood for a few moments; then, with the ſwiftneſs of deſperation, left the houſe, uncovered, and ran in a ſtrait direction, for a very conſiderable diſtance, without any determination as to where he ſhould fly.

CHAP. IX.

The fortunate have many paraſites: Hope is the only one that vouchſafes attendance upon the wretched and the beggar.

SHENSTONE.

A SCENE of confuſion followed the abrupt departure of Barnwell. Nothing but madneſs could be deviſed as the cauſe of ſuch a proceeding. Servants were diſpatched in every direction in purſuit of him; and even amidſt the general ruin that threatened them, each individual of the family felt a ſincere regret for the fate of one ſo univerſally eſteemed and beloved.

Miſs Freeman continuing too ill to be removed, and Mr. Emery being in a ſituation unfit to receive his wife and daughters,

ters, it was ſettled that the ladies ſhould remain, for the preſent, at Ramſgate; whilſt abſolute neceſſity compelled the diſtracted father of Maria to accompany Mr. Drudge immediately to London.

It was at this moſt critical moment that Sir James Barnwell, accompanied by the *Sage*, Sandall, arrived at Ramſgate; and, from ————'s hotel, addreſſed the following note to Mr. Emery.

" Sir James Barnwell preſents compliments to Mr. Emery, and begs leave to adviſe him of his arrival at Ramſgate, where he is to remain ſome time pr. order of his phyſician.—Underſtanding that his nephew is at preſent with Mr. Emery, at Ramſgate, Sir J. B. would be happy if the young man might be permitted to wait on him, having a communication from his mother to deliver to him.

" ————'s *Hotel*,
" *Thurſday*."

This

This note was delivered to Mrs. Emery, who was wholly incapable of anſwering it, and handed it over to Lord Morley, who, in turn, conveyed it to Mr. Eaſtwood, when the following private dialogue enſued:

"*Lord Morley.* What the devil's to be done, Eaſtwood. Poſitively, all this kind of *uproarineſs*, as one may call it, ſo abſolutely deranges one's ideas, I am ſcarcely *compos mentis.*"

"*Eaſtwood.* Preciſely my feelings, I aſſure you, my dear lord. I never was more completely *ennui* ſince I have exiſted. Really, my lord, it's a ſpecies of ſuicide to remain amidſt ſuch ſcenes. For my own part, I—I—had it in contemplation to have raiſed the ſiege, even had *not* the man's character been diſcloſed in ſuch moſt ſhocking colours; for I don't know, my lord, how you may have been treated, but the inſolence of Charlotte has lately been intolerable."

"*Lord*

" *Lord M.* How exactly ſimilar are our ſenſations. Really, one is apt to be blinded by affection; but of late my eyes have been much undeceived reſpecting Miſs Emery—ſuch vanity in both the girls!"

" *E.* Such coquetry!"

" *Lord. M.* Such lovers of ſcandal!"

" *E.* Such inanity of mind!"

" *Lord M.* Such paucity of ideas!"

" *E.* Such poverty of language!"

" *Lord M.* And then, how far from beauties!"

" *E.* They both paint!"

" *Lord M.* And paint ungracefully!"

" *E.* They

" *E.* They dreſs ridiculouſly!"

" *Lord M.* And yet extravagantly!"

" *E.* And as to fortune——!"

" *Lord M.* There's the rub——!"

" *E.* Poſitively, my lord, one's character is at ſtake, in remaining here any longer!"

" *Lord M.* Will you oblige me with your company a few days at Morley Park?"

" *E.* My dear lord, you overwhelm me! How can I poſſibly be ſo well, or ſo happily employed, as in Lord Morley's charming ſociety!"

" *Lord M.* We'll ſtart directly.—— You've a ready pen; anſwer this old gentleman's note; and leave one, in our joint

joint names, for Mrs. Emery. I'll order the carriages."

His lordſhip retired, and Mr. Eaſtwood wrote the following:

"Sir,

"From the tenor of your note to Mr. Emery, it is evident you are unacquainted with the late events that have taken place in that perſon's family. Mr. Emery has been proved a moſt unprincipled gameſter; and, in conſequence of ſome unfair tranſaction, has been called out, and ſeverely wounded. The rumour of this affair brought a ſwift ſucceſſion of demands upon the houſe, which appears to be in a moſt wretched and beggarly ſtate of inſolvency. Mr. Freeman, and the other perſon concerned, are alſo ruined, in the full ſenſe of the word. Your nephew, overcome by theſe events, or ſome other cauſe, has become deranged. He left the houſe in a fit of inſanity this morning.

morning, and has not ſince been heard of. It is truly afflicting to a delicate mind to relate ſuch events; but as Mrs. Emery is unfit for ſuch a taſk, it has devolved upon,

" Sir,

" Your moſt obedient,

" *Sir J. Barnwell,* H. EASTWOOD.

" ——*'s Hotel.*"

" Lord Morley, and the Rev. Mr. Eaſtwood, moſt cruelly tortured at the events which have taken place in Mr. Emery's family, would merit the ſevereſt cenſure, if, by their preſence, they continued to remind the unfortunate of their former ſituation in life. They are ſenſible, therefore, that they are conſulting Mrs. and the Miſs Emerys' tenderneſs of feeling, when they reſolve to ſave them the pain of a farewell, under their preſent circumſtances.

ſtances. Lord M. and Mr. E. will never ceaſe to remember, moſt gratefully, the many civilities they have received from every branch of the family; and will feel infinite ſatisfaction, if, at any time, the exigencies of that family can be relieved either by their advice, or their fortunes."

"*Mrs. Emery.*"

Thus fled theſe *ſummer friends* at the firſt blaſt of wintery adverſity. How different the conduct of the worthy Sir James Barnwell! Soon as he had peruſed Mr. Eaſtwood's note, he repaired to the houſe of mourning; nor did the heart-felt ſorrow, which ſeized him on his nephew's account, prevent him from tendering every conſolation in his power to the unfortunate Emerys.

Theſe ladies felt the change of circumſtances ſeverely indeed. Mother and daughters ſo reſembled each other in their feelings, that one deſcription ſerves each

each and all. Uneducated in any true principles of religion or morality, they had borne proſperity too ill to ſuſtain adverſity with fortitude. When they were ſurrounded by the luxuries and dainties of life, and ſeemed placed on an eminence above the reach of want, or woe, they had never been taught to reflect upon the means, by which they were thus exalted, whilſt millions of their fellow creatures *ſtruggled* to endure exiſtence: they never reflected, it was that chance "in the affairs of men" which gave *them* wealth, and *others* want; but vainly arrogating to themſelves a viſionary ſuperiority in the ſcale of human beings, called not the poor their brethren. Inſtead, therefore, of alleviating the conſequences of that inequality in ſociety (which experience ſeems to pronounce inevitable), the occupation of their lives was to increaſe that ſplendor, which dazzled—but never cheered the poor! The feelings of benevolence, the impulſe of charity, the glow

of

of ſenſibility, are words they may have heard, but emotions they had never felt. —How pitiable, then, their preſent ſituation. In an inſtant that pinnacle, on which they were exalted, ſinks;—and from affluence to poverty is but the journey of an hour. The ſentiments they had imbibed continue; and, judging from their own feelings, they conſider themſelves, of courſe, objects of contempt to the rich; whilſt, at the ſame time, fallen pride is naturally the ridicule of the poor.

The benevolent Knight in vain offered conſolation to minds the victims of childiſh fretfulneſs:—ſobs, tears, and fits ſucceeding fits, prevented the voice of reaſon from approaching their ears. Turning, therefore, from ſo vain an effort, he rendered them, unknown to themſelves, a moſt eſſential ſervice.

The proprietor of the ready furniſhed

houſe they occupied, had expreſſed, in his hearing, his wiſh they ſhould quit his premiſes, as he ſaw no chance of ever being paid. Sir James became reſponſible, and the landlord became quiet.—— Meanwhile, he had not neglected any ſteps immediately neceſſary for the diſcovery of his nephew. Hand-bills were printed, and brought home, deſcribing his perſon and dreſs, and were about to be circulated, when a fiſherman brought a letter, 'which,' he ſaid, 'a ſtrange young gentleman wrote, at a public houſe at Sandwich, where he was, and gave him a crown to bring it to this houſe.' It bore this direction—'Let any perſon, except the ſervants, open it.—G. B.'

Sir James broke the ſeal, and read as follows:—

"George Barnwell entreats moſt earneſtly, that his abrupt departure, and his abſence, may be moſt ſcrupulouſly concealed

cealed from the knowledge of his mother, his ſiſter, and his uncle. Whoever is officious enough to hint it to either, muſt anſwer for the moſt dreadful conſequences. ——A day—only a day, or two at moſt, he begs, upon his knees, for the concealment of this act.—If he returns not by to-morrow night——diſcovery *muſt* take place—for he will return ere then—or never!—Any attempts to diſcover him, now, will be fatal. Again he implores, in pity to his mother, to his ſiſter, to his uncle, and in mercy to himſelf, ſecrecy for a day!"

Whilſt Sir James held this note in his hand, and juſt as he wiped a tear from his eyes, entered Mr. Sandall. He had heard the ſtate of Mr. Emery's affairs, and accordingly followed his patron to enjoy the whole, true, and full account, as a moſt ample meal of ſcandal, upon which poiſonous food he loved to gormandize.

Obſequiouſly cringing, as he held the door in his hand—" I fear, Sir James, I intrude.—I—."

" Oh, Mr. Sandall," cried the knight, " my poor nephew——Read—read!"

" Alas, alas!" ſaid Sandall, when he had peruſed it. " Ay, this is always the end of ſuch fiery, uncontroulable youths. I was afraid what would be his conduct, ever ſince he ſo obſtinately reſiſted our arguments upon apparitions:—there was too much enquiring, doubting, hereſy, about that youth; and then, his connecting himſelf with that impious atheiſtical Illuminati, Mental; for I have proofs that he is one; or elſe what could be the meaning of his myſtic coffin lid, and his ſkull, and his nightly orgies in the abbey?"

" Silence—ſilence," cried Sir James. " You judge too quickly to judge impartially. May it not prove that ſome youthful

ful indiſcretions have brought on embarraſſments, of which he is aſhamed?—But what can he mean by a day or two's concealment? So *ſuddenly* to leave the houſe, too——It is all extraordinary!"

"It *is* extraordinary," ſaid Sandall, who never differed many moments from his patron's opinion.

"To acquaint his mother with the affair at preſent, would be cruel."

"It *would* be cruel," cried Sandall.

"And would anſwer no end," ſaid Sir James.

"No end at all," rejoined Sandall.

The reſult of their deliberations was, to continue their ſearch and enquiries after the poor fugitive, and at leaſt, for a day or two, to keep his mother and ſiſter ignorant of the event.

CHAP. X.

But grant that thoſe can conquer, theſe can cheat,
'Tis phraſe abſurd to call a Villain, Great:
Who wickedly is wiſe, or madly brave,
Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.

POPE.

WHILST ſuch was the ſtate of affairs at Emery's, the following letter, from Milwood to Zelotti, will unfold the ſcenes paſſing at the cottage. It was written the evening of the day on which Barnwell fled.

" Zelotti,

" Haſten, haſten on the wings of mighty Miſchief!—Events are rapidly ſucceeding each other of high and intereſting import. There are materials now ready to our hands, Zelotti, of which thy matchleſs talents might frame fabrics of

of felicity for thy Millwood, that will exiſt with her exiſtence. In plain terms, there is wealth ready to be gathered, that ſhall furniſh all the goods of exiſtence, all the pleaſures, enjoyments, and voluptuouſneſs of living, as long as I ſhall live.

" This will meet you, I hope, near my preſent humble cottage. I intend it merely as a plan of the camp you are entering. The ſtranger is rich, I am convinced beyond all doubt. There lie in a chair, by his bed-ſide, two packets, ſealed; only part of their contents were, therefore, viſible to the prying eye. I could diſcover enough, however, to know that Barnwell is the ſole poſſeſſor of his wealth after his deceaſe; and the words " eſtates in Hertfordſhire, jewels, caſh, &c." I could catch half glimpſes of. On the ſame chair is a caſket, doubtleſs the repoſitory of theſe ſaid jewels. My hand is eager for the blow, Zelotti!

" From old Townley, let me lead you to another character.—Emery has thrown his die, and loſt!—We ever, you know, concluded that would be the caſe. Half villains and half wits never thrive in this planet of the ſyſtem. Perhaps they may do better, ſhould they hereafter tenant the *moon*! Middleton, too, rejoice with me, my friend, Middleton is compelled to fly the kingdom, whilſt Emery, whom he has long made his ſtaff of life, is reduced to beggary. This is all well—this is a moſt delicious draught for the thirſt of proud revenge! But it ſhall not intoxicate the ſober Milwood. No, Zelotti;—'twere but a puny gratification for a mind like mine, did it end here; but mark the conſequences:—The forged acceptance for five hundred pounds, on which our tool Blackmore advanced me three, you recollect he was to reſerve in his own poſſeſſion till nearly due; but the needy rogue broke his promiſe, and diſcounted it to ſome jew, or, in other words, ſold it for three hundred

hundred and eighty. This bill, naturally enough, was ſuſpected, and Blackmore was acquainted of the circumſtance. This diſcovery, and the dread of ſome others, gave wings to the man of law, and by this time he is on his voyage to America. The boy Barnwell, terrified beyond all meaſure at this diſcovery, fled from his friends, like a lunatic, the moment he heard it; and having rambled the whole of this day without food, by ſecret paths, and under cover of the night, arrived here about an hour ago. Of all the compoſitions of human nature, that I have hitherto ſtudied, he is by far the neareſt to that ſtandard, which is called good in ſociety: of courſe the beſt adapted to our purpoſe; for, do we not know, Zelotti, that the wicked are wary? Had Barnwell brought with him, to Berners Street, polluted paſſions, would he ſo eaſily have fallen our victim? —Had Barnwell been in the habit of diſſembling, would he have ſcrupled to have told ſome varniſhed tale to Emery,

as an excuſe for borrowing three hundred pounds? Or, had his heart been caſed in adamant, as Middleton's, as our's, as half mankind's are, would he have committed himſelf to the riſk of death to have preſerved another's life? Oh, never!—But, no matter by what means we have enſnared him; he is now as completely in my power as my heart can wiſh. I am not altogether ſorry you are not here, till I have diſpoſed of him.—He is concealed in the chamber which muſt be your's. Moſt fortunately for us, he refuſes to ſee old Townley, and begs earneſtly that he may not be acquainted with his arrival.

Nor is this all:—as if chance itſelf had eſpouſed our cauſe, it has directed, juſt at this momentous criſis, Barnwell's uncle to Ramſgate, who has taken up his reſidence at the houſe where Emery reſided. This event has filled me with ambitious, bold deſires!

"What

"What think you, Zelotti; is it not poſſible to combine our ſchemes, and by a *double* blow accompliſh the diſmiſſal of Townley and old Barnwell both? 'Twould be a glorious achievment, and it's reſult would be a conſonant reward.——Huſh! * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *. 'Twas Barnwell ſtealing from his chamber; he tapped at my door, and I had juſt ſufficient time to conceal my letter, when he entered, more like a ſpectre than a man—his hair diſhevelled, his eyes red with weeping, his cheeks and lips pale as Conſumption. Speechleſs, he tottered towards my chair, and ſeated himſelf on the floor at my feet, reclining his head on my lap.

"As old Townley ſleeps in the room above, I dared not ſuffer him to ſpeak—I forced him to ſwallow a cordial, and have prevailed on him to throw himſelf upon the bed. He ſlumbers; but his mind, even in ſleep, is haunted. At in-

tervals he pronounces "Milwood" ſo loudly, that, if old Townley 'wakes, he muſt ſurely hear it. At other times he calls upon his mother, his Eliza, and has this moment uttered, in a voice of agony, "Father, father!—ſave me, ſave me!"—

"If theſe powerful effects follow the dread of a detection of forgery, a common reaſoner would ſay, there is but poor hope that we ſhall compel him to murder. That very dread, however, is the baſis of my hope—I'll keep him the whole of to-morrow in my own room, ſo that the chamber is ready for your reception. The light of to-morrow's ſun will ſhew me my Zelotti. Remember your part, and I will devote the whole of this night to the ſtudy of mine.

"Your's,

"ELINOR."

Whilſt, with a fiend-like induſtry, Milwood thus ſpread new toils for the unſuſ-

unſuſpecting victim of her infernal machinations, he, in broken ſlumbers, felt all the horrors of his ſituation; and when the light of morning diſpelled his dreams, the reality of his fate was, to his exquiſitely feeling heart, intolerable.

In the meanwhile Mental paſſed his hours moſt unpleaſantly. His ſituation became torture. He was placed under the ſame roof with his own, his only child; but every opportunity of converſe which he ſnatched, all the obſervations he could form, tended to confirm him more and more in the opinion, that this child was loſt to virtue for ever! Deſpairing, therefore, of the ſucceſs of any attempts towards her reformation, he that morning reſolved to remove from the cottage, without making himſelf known.

Ignorant of thoſe important events which had taken place at Mr. Emery's, he began to murmur at the abſence of Barnwell,

Barnwell, and hinted his intention of enquiring for him at Mr. Emery's, if he did not call in the courſe of that morning. This ſtep Milwood determined to prevent. About noon Zelotti arrived. Mental was in the parlour when he entered, and Milwood introduced them to each other.

The perſon and manners of this Italian were extremely prepoſſeſſing, and in a very few minutes he found means to entangle Mental in a converſation, in ſpite of the general taciturnity of the latter. Mental was, perhaps, in ſome degree, induced to this converſation by the curioſity he felt concerning Zelotti; but the Italian was too wary to allow the leaſt poſſible clue to his real character to eſcape him. Mental perceived, however, that Zelotti was no common man.

The firſt employment of Zelotti, after a conſultation with Milwood, was to aſ-

ſume

ſume the diſguiſe of a fiſherman, and *reconnoitre* Mr. Emery's late reſidence. He was admitted to the preſence of the almoſt diſtracted uncle of Barnwell. His olive complexion helped his diſguiſe, and he ſpoke Engliſh very well.

"I believe I am right," ſaid the impoſtor; "you are the maſter, as I take it, of one George Barnwell."

"No, no," cried Sir James, "I am his uncle. Where is he!—where is my nephew?"

"That is more than I muſt tell."

"But you ſhall be compelled to tell."

"No, Sir; I am poor, and roughly finiſhed; but I have never yet, nor I never will, betray my truſt."

"But

" But 'tis for his intereſt, 'tis for his happineſs alone, I wiſh to know. Take me, then, to the poor diſtracted youth, and he himſelf will bleſs you for it to the lateſt hour of his life."

" It muſt not be—I have ſworn an oath, your honour, a ſacred, ſolemn oath, that I would not utter a word that might lead to his diſcovery."

" What is the purpoſe of your errand, then?"

" This, your honour,—to ſay, that he will either come home to-night, or elſe that he will write a letter; but being much afraid his abſence might be blazed abroad, he wanted much to be aſſured that his mother nor his uncle were apprized of it."

" His mother and ſiſter are yet ignorant of it; and if he would return immediately, they might never know it. I have

have letters to deliver from them; but being ignorant of their contents, I know not how they might affect him."

"I'll anſwer for it, they will be the means of haſtening his return; beſides, your honour, if you were to ſend them, and ſome kind meſſage from yourſelf, I'd back it to the beſt of my power. Whilſt he is at my hut no harm ſhall come to him; and either I, or Margery, my dame, have always our eyes upon him. When he leaves us, I'll ſee, too, that he goes no where but to this houſe."

"Will you promiſe to do this—will you, on your oath, promiſe to do this?" ſaid the knight.—"And do you really think he will come to-night?"

"I do, I do," cried Zelotti.

"Then, here, honeſt fellow, take him theſe two letters from his mother and ſiſter, and tell him, that if all that I poſſeſs can render

render him happy, it is his own. Tell him, that if he will return to me this night, all that has paſt ſhall be kept ſecret for ever—tell him, in ſhort, good man, whatever you think can induce his return; and, depend on it, your reward ſhall not be ſmall." [Sir James was untying his purſe.]

"Put up your purſe, your honour," cried Zelotti; "the pleaſure of carrying ſuch a kind meſſage to heal his poor broken heart, is reward enough to Ned Martin."

He retired.—Sir James's heart was lightened conſiderably by the hope which this impoſtor occaſioned, and he wrote to his ſiſter-in-law, and his neice, to appriſe them of the change in his old friend Mr. Freeman's affairs, and ſlightly mentioned that his nephew was well; but much employed in conſequence of the unfortunate alteration in the circumſtances of his friends.

CHAP. XI.

I was contriving how to make you happy.
Think you to merit by your idle ſighs,
And not atteſt your love by one brave action.
THE DISTREST MOTHER.

UPON the return of Zelotti, a conference was held betwixt that ſubtle Italian and Milwood, the reſult of which was the following conduct:—

Barnwell had made her chamber his priſon. It was nearly dark when Milwood, confuſion and diſmay pictured in her countenance, ruſhed into the apartment, and locked the door.

"Barnwell!" exclaimed ſhe, "Barnwell! arouſe yourſelf, or we are loſt for ever!"

The

The unhappy Barnwell, almoſt ſtupified with ſorrow, ſat on a chair, his legs placed on a window-ſeat, reclining his head on his hand, like one inanimate.—He noticed nothing that ſhe ſaid. She approached him, took his hand in her's, and gazed full in his face.——

"Oh, Milwood! that face—thoſe eyes—were they deſigned by nature to accompliſh ſuch wide ruin? Poor Eliza! poor mother!"

There was ſuch a ſettled wildneſs in his eyes, that Milwood doubted, for a moment, whether he was ſenſible. After ſome time, a deep ſigh was followed by a flood of tears, which ſeemed greatly to relieve him.

"Come, come; for ſhame," ſaid ſhe, "conquer theſe unmanly vapours; ſummon the energy of your mind; now, Barnwell, it is you need them. This weak, puerile

puerile dejection, is ruinous and diſgraceful. Arouſe, Barnwell, arouſe!—think what you owe to the law of nature—your own defence—think what you owe the dignity of your nature, and ſcorn to crawl thus, on captive knees, beneath the iron ſceptre of imperious fate. Such baſe yielding ill becomes the man of mind, of ſovereignty, of ſoul—it ill becomes my Barnwell. Arm yourſelf, then, with the intrepidity of manhood, and ſtruggle to the laſt gaſp with fate, till death or triumph end the ſtrife."

"Alas! what is there more to be achieved? Do not the ſwift feet of Juſtice hunt me? Does not her outſtretched arm hold over my devoted head the ſword of death? What have I, then, to do, but to ſubmit?"

"Cowardly, grovelling notion! Why, a poor reptile outcaſt of ſociety, a being riſing ſcarcely any thing in intellect above the

the worm we tread on, a petty, common thief, trembling beneath the ſhadow of his gibbet, could not concede a meaner, more humiliating confeſſion. And ſhall Barnwell ſneak thus like a reptile to his hole, and die? Oh, whither are thy feelings fled? where are the powers of thy memory? What, tamely yield yourſelf to a felon's fate—chains, public infamy, and public death? Look at the effects of ſuch conduct on others—Behold the pale, death-like form that gave you life—gaze on her agonies—ſee how ſhe rends her grey hairs—how ſhe mangles thoſe breaſts that have nurtured thee! See, too, a beauteous ſiſter falling, in the bloom of life, a victim to thy diſgraceful fate!—whilſt I——"

"Hold, Milwood, as you value my exiſtence!—If thus you paint the horrors that await me, no ſtrength of reaſon, no ſuggeſtions of moral duty, will prevent me from inſtant ſuicide! Surely I was born for the accurſed purpoſe of inflicting

ing tortures on thoſe I love!—But ſpare me the painful picture. In my heart, in my brain, the impreſſion of all theſe horrors is fixed with unutterable anguiſh!"—

"You feel all theſe horrors, you ſay; yet who can believe it? You make no ſingle effort to avert them.—Inſenſible to the dangers that threaten us, tamely you indulge a fruitleſs ſorrow."

"Is it not *impoſſible* to eſcape theſe dangers?"

"It is poſſible not to endure them."

"What poſſible means of avoiding detection can you deviſe, Milwood? Is not the forgery diſcovered?—Is it not traced even to Blackmore?"

"Ay, even to Milwood—but what then? Think you that Milwood will ſurrender up herſelf to galling fetters, to a public trial, to an *ignominious* death, whilſt this friendly ſteel is here?" [At theſe

theſe words ſhe expoſed the handle of the dagger which ſhe conſtantly wore in her boſom.]

"Milwood, you dare not meditate ſuch miſchief!" ſaid Barnwell, ſeizing her hand." "Oh, here, in this breaſt, rather plunge the weapon! Why ſhould you bleed for my crimes—why—oh, my brain burns——I am giddy with madneſs of thought!"

"Of what does Barnwell think the nature of his Milwood is compounded? Surely, he muſt think fear of death is an ingredient in her compoſition, if he ſuppoſes ſhe can undergo, with coward patience, the ſolemn mockeries of funeral preparations, aſcend a ſcaffold, face a multitude, and bear the tortures of ſuperſtitious rites and ceremonies, merely for a *little* longer life. No, ſince we muſt die, let us, like Romans, meet the blow, rather than wait the lingering ſtroke of *ſyſtematic* murder."

"You

"You ſpeak as if we were already apprehended, and even ſentenced."

"And is it not ſo? Do you imagine that, in our preſent condition, there is a poſſibility of our eſcape? Have I—have you—ten pounds in our poſſeſſion? Will the billows of the ocean bear us on their naked waves to ſhores of ſafety? Will the owner of any veſſel ſhelter *poor* and *pennyleſs* fugitives? Folly's own ſons would ſpurn ſo poor a hope. To-morrow, in all human probability, if we reſolve to live, a priſon will be our dwelling. Then, the very means of freeing our ſpirits from their bondage will be taken from our hands, and we ſhall curſe the torpitude of ſoul, that let this precious moment paſs. Come, man, be bold, and let a woman's courage give you ſtrength. —This draught" (preſenting a phial) "will give your troubled ſoul, my Barnwell, an everlaſting calm."

Barnwell ſhuddered with horror; his whole maſs of blood ſeemed, in a moment, congealed; the coldneſs of death ſeized his limbs, and the features of his face were worked up to phrenſy.

"Thou a woman?" exclaimed he, "a woman! No—no—no—thou art ſome ſpirit of the grand enemy of mankind, permitted to aſſume this lovely form, to blaſt the peace of families, to ſever the hearts of mother, ſiſter, ſon and brother, from each other; to drain the human heart of it's own natural affections, and in their place implant a poiſonous luſt, that generates a chilling apathy to all but thine accurſed ſelf: that wars with all that is good and amiable in ſociety, that ſtirs rebellion againſt God himſelf, prompts the deſpairing ſoul to the laſt damning act of ſin, and bears it, with a horrid yell of triumph, to ſcenes of endleſs torture and deſpair!"

In the extreme of agony, the loſt youth tore his hair, threw himſelf upon the floor and

and abandoned himſelf to the violence of his deſpair!

Milwood, with the malice and art of a dæmon, ſilently contemplated the progreſs of her operations. She ſuffered him to exhauſt the violence of his feelings, and ſat covering her face with her handkerchief. After ſome time, Barnwell, raiſing his eyes from the floor, beheld her in tears.

What is that potent, moſt myſterious influence, to which is given the name of Love? Say, ye, who aim at defining all the influences and operations of our nature, who preſume to have diſcovered cauſes for all the actions of men,—how is it, that a being, endowed with more than the common powers of reaſon, whoſe heart has been fenced with the leſſons of virtue, ſhould, by the influence of this moſt powerful paſſion, be impelled to the commiſſion of deeds, at which, when that

influence ceaſes to operate, his heart recoils with horror, and his reaſon ſurveys with aſtoniſhment?

Barnwell ſaw her tears; they were like burning drops upon his own heart—he aroſe—he flew to the diſſembler.

"Milwood, Milwood!—you weep—you are wretched—and I have made you ſo!"

"You have, indeed," ſaid ſhe. "Oh, unkind—oh, cruel! But I deſerve it—yes, I deſerve it, Barnwell; but could I have imagined *you*, of all men, would thus heap reproaches upon the poor heart o'er which you have triumphed! Oh, no—the taunts of ſociety, the ſcorn of my own ſex, the deriſion of yours,—theſe I expected, Barnwell; but that *you* ſhould revile me—that *you* ſhould——Oh! 'tis this overcomes me!"

She

She wept, and her whole ſoul ſeemed melted into woe. Barnwell, irreſolute and wavering in his mind, was at a loſs in what language to addreſs her. She continued——

" If our fates have proved calamitous; if evil, following on the heels of evil, purſues us, how am I to blame? Did *I* requeſt that ſecond fatal interview, the ſource of all our woes? Was I not prepared to leave for ever the iſle, which you inhabited? Have I received an intereſt or a pleaſure ſeparate from yours, ſince that ill-fated hour? And yet I am arraigned as guilty of intentional crimes. Oh, youth! lovely, yet unfortunate, be juſt, even amidſt your ſufferings. Why have I offered you the antidote of death to the miſeries that threaten?—becauſe I knew you timid, ſcrupulouſly heſitating; when the only means of eſcaping them are bold, enterpriſing, and uncommon; ſuch as, indeed, are above the uſe of beings educat-

ed in the prejudices and errors of ſyſtems; ſuch as I know you never could be brought to uſe; and, therefore, we muſt die!"

"Die!" exclaimed Barnwell; "you—you muſt die? Oh, God forbid!—Let us fly—let us fly this inſtant, Milwood! I begin to ſee your horrible condition" (putting his hand to his forehead.) "Merciful Heaven!—Milwood, why did *you* concern yourſelf in the accurſed forgery?—Oh, forgive my madneſs, when I accuſed you. Where is—where is my friend—where is Townley? I muſt ſee him, or it will be too late—perhaps already it is too late to eſcape our purſuers.—He will give me any ſum of money we may want—Let me go to him."

"Alas! my Barnwell," cried Milwood, prepared for this propoſal, "hope nothing there. He left the cottage this morning early, as he ſaid, on urgent buſineſs,

ſineſs, and will not return till to-morrow: by that period our fate will be decided."

"*Our* fate, Milwood! No, no, *you* muſt not ſuffer. On me—on me, juſt Heaven, pour thy vengeance! But has not my friend left his caſket?—I know it's value—I know your right to it."

"You talk wildly, my Barnwell! But even had we the right you ſpeak of, we have not the power; the caſket is not here."

"Did he not ſay whither he was gone?"

"No."

"Did he ever converſe with you on any ſubjects beſides common ones? Did he ever make any diſcovery, or throw out any hints?"

"No—no—none—but let us not waſte time now in words, when every moment that eſcapes us brings the criſis of our fate ſtill nearer."

"You are calm, Milwood!—Ah! then, I know your reſolution—Give me that dagger."

"No, Barnwell; 'tis the laſt wreck of hope that's left to cling to."

The diſtracted youth now raved again—all the endearments of the ſyren, all the high-wrought picturings of memory, burſt at once on his imagination. She was every thing to him, in this moment of tranſportation from himſelf. All other exiſtence was to him as though it exiſted not; and to contemplate the deſtruction of this idol of his ſoul, or rather the extinction of this eſſence of his own exiſtence, was beyond the efforts of his reaſon.

reaſon. He ſunk ſenſeleſs on her boſom.——

"Oh, were there any means, however deſperate, however dangerous, by which I might ſave you, Milwood!" ſaid he, after ſome time.

"There is a way, Barnwell; but it is a track unmarked by vulgar footſteps: the great of ſoul alone walk in this path —the votaries of ambition, of revenge, and all the higher, nobler propenſities of our nature. Men of low and grovelling impulſes tremble at it's entrance, and turn aſide, ſeeking each little petty avenue of cowardly eſcape, whilſt thoſe of higher daring, boldly tread the paths of blood!"

"Go on," cried Barnwell: "I underſtand you."

"If he,—who holds the fatal paper, which is to witneſs againſt us to our

death—if he and you, Barnwell, were in ſome retired ſpot, far from the prying eye of mortals,—how would you act?"

"Milwood, there is a deſperate meaning in your words—*Know* you *who* holds the bill?"

"I do."

"Is he ſome villain—ſome uſurious ſhark, that has long preyed upon the diſtreſſes of his fellow-creatures?—Say, is he a father—or a huſband?—Would his death——Oh, whither am I wandering?"

"In the road to ſafety—to future years of peace and joy—had you but the courage of a man. You have diſcovered, Barnwell, the *only* avenue of eſcape from death. Think on't, man:—Does not the law of nature loudly call on you to act? If, in the highway, another meet you with

ſome

ſome deadly weapon, and threaten your deſtruction,—what is the impulſe nature gives?—Here is but trifling difference—An inſtrument of death—no matter what—is in the hands of one who threatens you, and in you all who love you, with deſtruction!—If, then, by a blow that nature herſelf prompts, you can diſarm your foe —— Barnwell, do you underſtand me?"

He had fixed his eyes, which had a death-like glaſſy appearance, firmly on Milwood—his hands were clenched tightly together, and reſted on his knees.

"Milwood," ſaid he, continuing in the ſame poſture, "Milwood, I have taken a deſperate reſolve!—Who had dared have told me, a few months ago, that I ſhould prove a murderer!—But I ſhall—ay, you ſhall live, Milwood, in mirth and jollity:—After theſe hands have done the bloody

deed, will we not be merry? Nay, you look grave, my love!"

This was not the preciſe diſpoſition to which ſhe had aimed to bring him. There was a wildneſs in his manner, bordering ſo nearly on inſanity, that ſhe trembled with the apprehenſion, that he might betray their purpoſe.

"This is the rant of madneſs," cried ſhe; "not the deciſion of courage."

"By Heaven, I'll do it! I have diſmiſſed that troubleſome gueſt that has hitherto daunted my courage—it is fled—fled for ever. I have now no conſcience, but thy voice, my love. Come, let us to action—Where does the old villain dwell?"

"Be more yourſelf, Barnwell,—you rave."

"No,

" No, by my ſoul, I am calm! Come, give me my victim—ſee the moon riſes, and the hour of foul deeds draws nigh."

Milwood pauſed—ſhe meditated—ſhe ſaw his ſoul wound up to deſperation, and ripe for the deed ſhe wiſhed concluded; but, ever wary in her deſigns, ſhe looked beyond the deed, and ſaw his ſtate of mind ill calculated for it's concealment, when performed. She pauſed again—ſhe recollected, that there is a criſis in mental operations, and knew, that if ſhe ſuffered this criſis of deſperation to arrive, without accompliſhing her end, it never would return. She well knew the ſtate of langour that would ſucceed it, and, with a boldneſs of determination, reſolved upon the riſk. When ſhe had reſolved, ſhe took his hands, ſhe kiſſed them, bathed them with tears, and called him by the deareſt title of Saviour.

" Every

"Every hour of my future exiſtence will be a gift of thine," ſaid ſhe; "to thee, my ſaviour, ſhall I owe all the years of life I may enjoy. But, are you firm, my hero?"

"I am reſolved."

"But when you ſhall hear *who* is the victim, the neceſſary victim, for whom Fate calls,—oh, then, all my hopes of life will vaniſh!—You will prefer his life to mine, to a mother's, a ſiſter's, to your own!"

"No—no—no," cried he; "were my father living, and in the way 'twixt life and you, I *think*—yes, I *think*, I ſhould, Milwood——!"

"But you have a near relation, who yet lives, Barnwell—you have an—"(ſhe held his hand graſped tightly in her own) "—an—an—Uncle!"

"Is

" Is it my poor uncle, then?—Oh!"—

He ſtruck his head violently.——She ſuffered him to remain ſilent a few minutes, and then, in a moſt tender voice—

" Barnwell, ſpeak to me—tell me—am I to die?"

He threw himſelf into her arms.

" Live, Milwood, live!—though perdition, everlaſting perdition, be the price of your exiſtence!"

From this moment he was loſt. The ſituation of his uncle at Mr. Emery's was made known to him; ſhe perſuaded him that the forged bill had paſſed into his poſſeſſion; that, ignorant who had forged it, he ſtill held it; and, if he lived, muſt, in ſpite of every wiſh to the contrary, be compelled to appear againſt them.

CHAP. XII.

Hear me, you wicked one,—
You have put hills of fire within this breaſt;
Not to be quench'd with tears; for which my guilt
Sits on your boſom!

TRAGEDY OF PHILASTER.

SIR James Barnwell had juſt finiſhed a ſolitary ſupper, when Barnwell, attended by Zelotti, rung the bell at the gate of the court yard. The pride of Mrs. Emery and her daughter confined them to their chambers; the poor Maria was entruſted to the care of a nurſe; and Mr. Sandall was gone to viſit a friend at Margate.

The pretended fiſherman introduced Barnwell to his rejoicing uncle, who fell on his neck, and embraced him. Barnwell, pale and trembling, ſeated himſelf ſilently

ſilently on a chair, and ſupported his head by leaning his elbow on the table. Zelotti, in a whiſper to Sir James, obſerved, that the leſs notice was taken of him, and the earlier they retired, the better, and then departed. The anguiſh of the old man, as he looked upon his nephew, was keen indeed.

"You look ill, my nephew; you are fatigued. We will not enter on the cauſe of your uneaſineſs to-night; but if your happineſs can be reſtored by any means in my power, aſſure yourſelf of my beſt endeavours."

"You are very good—yes, you are *truly* good—and that's one comfortable reflection," ſaid Barnwell.

Sir James little ſuſpected the drift of his diſcourſe.

"Have you ſupped, George?"

"I have

"I have not eat a long while, Sir; my appetite is gone, quite gone—but I can drink—what have you there, wine?"

The wine was on the table; he drank a bumper greedily.

"You don't enquire after your mother, or your ſiſter, George."

"Oh, true!—you're right—my mother—ah, my mother—and Eliza—poor girl!——Come, Sir, won't you take ſome wine?"

Sir James was alarmed at his wild manner. Barnwell poured out another bumper, and ſwallowed it.

"How much does it want to one o'clock?" ſaid he.

"'Tis not yet twelve," ſaid Sir James.

At

At that inſtant Mr. Sandall entered the room. Sir James intimated ſilence to him. Barnwell looked at him, but did not notice him.

"What an altered houſe is this!" ſaid Barnwell. "No more merriment!—Well, I muſt to bed—and you, Mr. Sandall, being a divine, will pray for us all.—Uncle, do you pray every night?"

Sir James, who conceived his brain injured, humoured him, and anſwered him —"Always, George."

"I am glad of that," ſaid he; "you are a righteous man, and your prayers are heard."

He rung for the ſervant. At the door he turned round, and ſtood with his eyes fixed ſome time on his uncle, then retired, ſaying, as he left the room, "God bleſs you, Sir,—good night."

When

When the man had attended him to his chamber door, which was one, among ſeveral, in a long gallery——" There poor Miſs Freeman ſleeps—does ſhe not, Sam?"

" Yes, Sir."

" And in that room, I ſuppoſe, my uncle ſleeps."

" No, Sir, the other gentleman has that room—Sir James lies in this *here*, next to your's."

" Does that clock, that ſtands at the end of the gallery, ſtrike the hours, Sam?"

" Yes, Sir."

" Do the lamps at each end of the gallery burn all night?"

" Yes, Sir, till near day light."

" Good

"Good night, Sam."

He retired to his chamber. The clock ſtruck twelve.——"One hour more!" exclaimed he. He paced about the chamber in agony of thought.——"Huſh!" murmured he to himſelf, "I hear his aged footſteps—he paſſes my door—he enters his chamber. Will he lock the door?—no—he dreads the danger of fire, and rather truſts to man's mercy than a ſenſeleſs element! Hark! he prays—Good God! he prays for me—even me! Liſten!—'Reſtore his peace of mind.' —Oh, poor martyr! that's a vain petition —Alas, Milwood! what have I ſworn to do?—But you cannot both live! Why, oh, why was I permitted to ſee this hour!—Hark! the bed creaks—he lays his aged limbs to reſt—never, never more to riſe!"

All was now perfect ſilence in the houſe, ſo that the daſhing of the ocean's waves were heard diſtinctly, the windows of

of that range of chambers overlooking the ſea. When he parted from Milwood ſhe had furniſhed him with a dagger, and given him a ſmall packet, with an injunction not to open it till the bell tolled one. This dagger he now drew from his boſom, and placed it, with the packet, on the table.

His reflections now grew more and more tormenting; his reſolution was a hundred times ſhaken, and raiſed again by the memory of Milwood. When the idea of her public death ruſhed acroſs his brain, madneſs nerved his arm, and he often graſped the dagger in a ſtate of phrenſy.

In this horrible conflict the hour paſſed away; the clock in the gallery ſtruck one. A chilly ſweat dewed his whole frame—his blood ſhot like a bolt of ice to his heart. With a trembling hand he opened the packet; it contained a moſt animating likeneſs of Milwood, in miniature,

ture, and fully anſwered the purpoſe ſhe intended. A ſmall ſcroll of paper contained, in her own hand writing, theſe words:—"If another hour elapſes, and the deed is not performed, you may gaze on the reſemblance of Milwood, but will never behold the original alive." He gazed on the portrait; he read the ſcroll again; again he contemplated the miniature—he kiſſed it with fervor—his brain grew inflamed—imagination rioted.—He kiſſed the miniature again—he placed it in his boſom, graſped the dagger, and, throwing off his ſlippers, opened his chamber door. Not a breath moved along the gallery—he ſtood trembling for a few moments, fearfully gazing around him—his ſhadow on the floor ſtartled him—he ſhuddered. Once more he drew the portrait from his boſom, and looked on it by the light reflected from the lamp. Summoning a deſperate effort, he made two or three ſtrides, and found himſelf in his uncle's chamber. He cloſed the door

door after him, and approached the bed-ſide. A chamber lamp burned in the fire place: by this light, as he leaned againſt the feet of the bed, he perceived his uncle ſlept. At that moment he fancied, that he heard a footſtep in the gallery—he liſtened, and was confirmed it was ſo. He fixed his eyes upon the door in horrid dread of a detection, and half concealed the dagger in his boſom, ſtill holding the handle. No one entered —all was again ſilent. Once more he ſlowly drew the dagger forth, and once more turned his eyes upon his ſleeping uncle. The dim, faint light, emitted from the lamp, juſt ſerved to diſcover his tranquil features. His lips were cloſed in a ſmile, that indicated peaceful ſlumbers. As he contemplated this ſcene, a deep groan pierced the ears of Barnwell: frozen with horror he dared not to turn his head towards the gallery, whence it ſeemed to iſſue, but remained fixed as a ſtatue. In another moment a voice, ſoftly,

but

but distinctly, uttered—"I'll sit all night on his cold, cold grave!" He fancied it was the voice of his sister. The dagger fell from his senseless hand, and he clung to the pillars of the bedstead for support. Waked by the noise and motion, his uncle started up. Barnwell, instigated by a sudden impulse, in which fear was an ingredient, snatched up the dagger, sprung upon the breast of the venerable old man, and plunged it's fatal point deep in his heart! One groan only preceded his dissolution!

The moment the fatal blow was struck, remorse was kindled, with all it's horrors, in the breast of Barnwell; a remorse too powerful for words or action; it was as a consuming fire kindled in the centre of his heart. In a few moments the same voice he had heard before, exclaimed—"In heaven he will be mine, for Milwood cannot come to heaven." Roused to madness, he rushed like lightning to

the door, opened it, without regard to the noiſe he made, and beheld, ſitting in her night gown at his own room door, Maria Freeman. This amiable and afflicted girl, ſtill the victim of concealed affection, grew hourly worſe. Her mind conſtantly fixed on the object of her love, was now impreſſed with the notion of his death, and her attendant having fallen aſleep, the lovely maniac had left her bed under the impreſſion of viſiting his tomb. The noiſe and his appearance cauſed her to utter the moſt violent ſhrieks, which brought Mr. Sandall and the ſervants to be witneſſes to a ſcene of the utmoſt horror! Barnwell, taking the advantage of their confuſion, burſt through them all, and fled with incredible ſpeed towards the cottage.

Urged on by an inſtinctive ſenſe of danger, ſcarcely knowing the route he took, and, without beſtowing a thought on the certain conſequeences of his ſudden flight, he purſued his way. Each ſtep he took

took, he trembled; even the falling leaf that floated in the air, alarmed him. As he approached the ſea, the roaring of the water appalled his guilty ſoul with terror. If, for a minute, he raiſed his eyes from the ground, the moſt horrid images floated before them. His uncle's mangled, bleeding corpſe, his father's angry ghoſt, the very torments of the damned racked his imagination! The gloomy aſpect of the heavens aided the force of theſe guilt-born terrors, and rendered his ſituation horrible beyond expreſſion!

With difficulty he at length found the wicket gate of the cottage—it was locked, nor could all the noiſe he was capable of making gain him admiſſion. Dreading to remain unhouſed, he endeavoured to explore an entrance at the back of the garden, by climbing up to the arbour from the ſands. The tide was flowing rapidly in, and he found he had no time to loſe. By perſeverance, ſpurred on by the deſperation of his mind, he

gained, at length, a footing on a part of the cliff, that overhung the ſea, and was within a few paces of the arbour.

Exhauſted with fatigue, and overpowered by the conflicting exerciſes of his mind, he threw himſelf down on the rock, with a groan of agony. The fever of the ſoul became exchanged for a moſt awful langour—he dared not to think. The roaring of the waters underneath, at length, arouſed him, and the horrors of his ſituation flaſhed once more acroſs his imagination.

At that moment, riſing from the ground, he felt ſtrongly impelled to plunge from the precipice on which he ſtood into the gulph of waters; but, almoſt at the ſame inſtant, the murmuring of approaching whiſpers ſtartled him, and arreſted his attention. It was too dark to diſcern their faces; but he could diſtinguiſh a man and woman plainly, as the former carried a lantern

lantern in his hand. They approached the edge of the cliff, and appeared to make towards the ſpot where he ſtood. A little to the right there was a ſpot, where the chalk had fallen away ſome feet in depth, and left a hollow ſpace. Here he crept, and concealed himſelf. In a few moments they were cloſe to the place of his concealment—a voice, which he too well knew, now ſtruck his ear—'twas Milwood's.

"Well," ſaid ſhe, "how is the tide?"

"Coming in," ſaid the man, who was Zelotti; "but it won't do this tide; it will be break of day ere there be ſufficient depth of water."

"Curſed delay!" cried Milwood; "what muſt be done with the body, then?"

"Let it remain in the ſack, under the ſeat in the arbour, till another night."

"That might do, if we were certain of remaining here; but I dread the morning, Zelotti. Fool that I was, to truſt a work of ſuch a nature to his hands. If Barnwell ſhould be detected in the act, or by his weakneſs diſcover it when done, we muſt fly inſtantly, and then old Townley's corpſe would be diſcovered, and his murder clearly traced to me."—[How poor Barnwell ſhuddered!]

"That's true," replied Zelotti. "Let me conſider: as there are no marks of violence upon his perſon, ſuppoſe we ſtrip him; the effects of the poiſon, in ſwelling the body, may paſs well enough for the ſame effects produced by drowning; ſo that if it floats, and is diſcovered in the morning, there would be no ground of ſuſpicion."

"Quick, then, about it!" cried Milwood; "there has been too much delay. —Oh, Zelotti! if Barnwell's heart were

but

but moulded like our own, what a glorious harveſt ſhould we reap!—But, my ſoul miſgives me—I fear his tenderneſs, his fooliſh remorſe.—Would this night were well over."

They had now retired out of the hearing of Barnwell. He had, however, heard enough to petrify his ſoul with horror!—It was plain that Milwood had poiſoned her father!——Language is not equal to the taſk of deſcribing what now paſſed in his agonized boſom!—Dreading to meet them, he was compelled to keep his ſituation. Sooner than he imagined they returned, and in a few moments the awful ſound ſmote his ear of the fall of poor Mental's corpſe into it's grave of billows!—He could not check a deep groan at that inſtant.

"Did you hear any thing?" ſaid Zelotti.

"No," ſaid Milwood; "*you* are not ſurely turning ſuperſtitious?"

"I am ſure I heard a groan," ſaid Zelotti.

"Fancy—fancy—man," cried ſhe:—"Come, we have work to do—Peace to old Townley—now for his treaſures."

They bent their way towards the arbour. Barnwell followed them with his eye. In their hurry they forgot the ladder by which they deſcended from the window of the arbour. He noticed this neglect, and, waiting a conſiderable time, his firſt impulſe was to aſcend the ladder; but he checked it, and continued wandering near the ſpot till break of day. The tortures inflicted by his conſcience became almoſt inſupportable, and he once again reſolved to die.

At the very moment, however, of acting upon this dreadful reſolution, an indeſcribable

deſcribable terror ſeized him, and turned him from his purpoſe. The conviction of a future ſtate was ſo deeply impreſſed upon his mind, that, though ſurrounded by miſery, he dared not to plunge, uncalled, into eternity. Again, when the horrible conſequences of his crime ruſhed in force upon his imagination, he felt almoſt irreſiſtibly impelled to eſcape them by the only means left—the guilt of ſuicide!

Thus wretchedly paſſed the hours of darkneſs: now the torments of his ſituation drove him almoſt to ſelf murder; and now the dread of what another world might prove, deterred him from the crime. Nor was the recent ſcene he had witneſſed the leaſt part of his preſent wretchedneſs—Sorrow for the fate of Mental, at any common period, would have powerfully afflicted him; but when the incontrovertible evidence of his own ſight and hearing proved to him the real

character of Milwood, ſurpriſe, agony, and deſpair took poſſeſſion of his ſoul!

Such was the ſtate of mind in which, early in the morning, Milwood and Zelotti diſcovered the poor, loſt Barnwell. Anxiety reſpecting the body of the murdered Mental brought them to obſerve if the tide had thrown it on the ſhore. When Milwood firſt ſaw Barnwell, he was kneeling, his hands claſped, and his eyes fixed on the riſing ſun.

"Amazement!" exclaimed ſhe. "Barnwell! Barnwell!—Tell me, do my ſenſes deceive me?"

Barnwell ſurveyed her with a wild enquiring gaze, but ſpoke not.

"Anſwer me," ſaid ſhe; "does he live?"

"In

"In heaven!" ſaid Barnwell, ſhaking his head, and ſhewing ſome blood upon his hands.

"Why, then, are you here?" ſaid ſhe; "you ſhould have remained in your chamber, as I directed you, to avoid ſuſpicion. —Where is the dagger—where is the miniature?"

"By his bleeding corpſe!" ſaid Barnwell, ſolemnly.

"Fool!—madman!—Did you *intend* detection?—My portrait left in the room! —perhaps my letter too.—Zelotti, we muſt fly—this inſtant we muſt fly!— Away—away!—and leave this whimpering boy to the fate his folly merits."

She caſt a look of contemptuous rage on him, and walked ſwiftly towards the arbour, followed by Zelotti.

Barnwell, roused from his stupor of misery, by this conduct, pursued them, exclaiming, as he went——"Milwood—Milwood—hear me!" At the foot of the ladder he seized her hand eagerly——"Lost—lost woman!—Why am I still anxious concerning you?—why, even after you have driven me to perdition, do I still love you?—why is it, that, though I know you a murderer, I cannot—cannot detest you?—Oh, then, listen to me, Milwood; and, instead of attempting to escape the just punishment of our crimes, let us surrender ourselves to death, as the only atonement in our power, and devote the few hours we may live in preparing for eternity!"

"Canting babe!—preaching infant!" cried Milwood, scornfully. "Know, fool, that she, to whom you preach, is of a nature above indulging such dreams, as haunt children of prejudice, and dupes of priest-craft, like yourself. She scoffs your

your counſel, and deſpiſes you for offering it. To you, and ſuch as you, ſhe leaves it to bend the neck ſubmiſſively to laws and ordinances. Her life is her all; ſhe dreams of no future worlds, nor dreads accounts hereafter. On ſuch, the puny fears of others, ſhe builds her towering projects, and would not ſcruple, if ſhe had the power, to hurl yon blazing orb of light from its fixed centre to deſtroy whole ſyſtems, that oppoſed her purpoſe."

"Can human nature fall ſo low?" cried Barnwell; "can that, which we are taught to believe emanates from Deity itſelf, become infernal?"

"Who is this Deity you ſpeak of—where is his power?—If he exiſts, why did he ſuffer you, a villain, maddened by luſt, to murder ſleeping innocence?—Fool!—fool!—fool!—Away Zelotti."

"Yet

"Yet, one moment, hold," cried Barnwell. "Where is my friend—where is Townley? Oh, what muſt be your agony, Milwood, when you hear, that Townley, he whoſe murdered corpſe, laſt night, you yielded to the deep, was—your father!"

"Already is the mighty ſecret known!" ſaid ſhe. "I know he was my father—I own, too, that theſe hands mixed and adminiſtered the doſe that poiſoned him! —Where was the Deity you talk of, *then?*—Why did not his power, if he poſſeſſes it, prevent ſo foul a deed? I knew not, *at the moment*, that he was my father: the contents of his caſket, and his papers told me, that he had played a character that he was not in reality, and he has fallen in conſequence.—'Tis poſſible he might have lived, but for his deception."

Barnwell was petrified with horror and aſtoniſhment!

"In

"In a few hours," continued Milwood, as ſhe aſcended the ladder, "ſome dungeon may immerſe us, if we remain, Zelotti.—Come, then, nor let us waſte the preſent opportunity."

As ſhe uttered the laſt word, ſhe entered the arbour by the window. In the ſame inſtant ſhe ſhrieked violently, and three men ruſhed down the ladder, from the window, and ſecured Barnwell and Zelotti. The ravings of Milwood were too horrible to deſcribe. During their abſence from the cottage, Mr. Sandall, attended by ſeveral of the domeſtics, and conducted by the information found in Barnwell's papers, had arrived there, and forced the outer gates. As the garden door was open, they had juſt entered the arbour, when the voice of Barnwell arreſted their attention; and concluding, from the replies of Milwood, that ſhe was returning, they ſtationed themſelves in ſuch a manner as

to

to ſecure her when ſhe entered. The criminals were immediately conveyed before a magiſtrate, and committed to priſon. Milwood continued to rave. Zelotti loaded her with reproaches; but Barnwell ſilently hung down his head, and endeavoured to conceal the tears, that dewed his pallid cheeks.

CHAP. XIII.

Think, timely think, on the laſt dreadful day,
How you will tremble there, to ſtand expos'd
The foremoſt in the rank of guilty ghoſts,
That muſt be doom'd for murder!

DRYDEN.

NIGHT approached—Milwood, who, during the whole day, had ſought, in vain, an opportunity of ſelf-deſtruction; at length, overcome by the violent exertions of deſpair, ſunk on her pillow, and ſlept. Two women, who were appointed to watch in her apartment, ſoon after midnight, were arouſed by the violent ſhrieks which ſhe uttered in her ſleep. Pierced to the heart by her exclamations, which ſeemed to indicate the moſt excrutiating tortures of her mind, they were yet too ſuperſtitious to awake her. Several inhabitants of the priſon, alarmed by her dreadful cries, entered the apartment, and ſtood trembling round the bed of the deſpairing Milwood.

Milwood. Big drops of ſweat rolled down her cheeks, her eyes were half open, her teeth gnaſhed horribly, and her whole frame was ſtrongly convulſed.

At length, ſtarting up in the bed, ſhe ſeized the hand of a by-ſtander, exclaiming, in a voice of horror——"Am I in hell? —Oh, torment me not, my father!—do not *you* inflict the tortures!—Barnwell—Barnwell—end my miſeries!—Oh, they have torn my fleſh with burning pincers! —Now they are ſhooting ſparks of fire in my eyes—ſcorpions faſten on my breaſts—and ſee, my murdered father fixes his ghaſtly eyes on me!—Barnwell, I own the deed:—thy uncle's bleeding ghoſt approaches!—Save me—ſave me!—See, they bring more brands of fire—ſhowers of fire deſcend!—Oh, my heart burns—it burns—and yet I do not die!"

A ſhivering fit now ſeized her, and ſhe awoke. Caſting her eyes wildly round her

her, by degrees she recollected her situation. Among the prisoners, who stood near her, was a clergyman, confined for debt. Viewing the horrors of her mind, he was prompted to offer her some consolation.

"Unhappy woman!" said he, "see the sad consequences of guilt!—As yet thy terrors are only imaginary; may they prove salutary, and lead you to seek, by heart-felt penitence, that christian hope of mercy, which alone can calm your mind!—Are you willing I should pray with you?"

She fixed her eyes upon him—— "Mercy!" cried she. "Penitence!—Pray for me!—To whom?"

"To your Almighty Judge!"

"There

"There is not an Almighty Judge—'Tis falſe, old man.—There is not—cannot—no—no—there cannot be another world—or if there is, why am I tortured with the thought of it—when, if there is—I—I—oh! no—no—do not ſay there is another world!"

"Surely, moſt ſurely, there is," ſaid the good old man, with a vehemence that made her tremble.

She ſtruck her hand violently againſt her head.——"If, indeed, there ſhould," exclaimed ſhe, "horrible thought!—I dare not think!—Oh, if you have any pity for my wretched lot, give me ſome potent draught, ſome cordial, that will drown all ſenſe of what is paſt—all dread of what may come!"

The worthy miniſter, who truly merited the title of a chriſtian prieſt, exerted every effort to ſooth the workings of deſpair

ſpair. He diſmiſſed the idle gazers from the room, and was in the act of kneeling, to offer up a prayer, when the poor object of his ſolicitude ſhrieked violently, and implored him to deſiſt.

"'Tis torture—torture—torture!" cried ſhe; "I am accurſed, and I hate all good!"

Finding his attentions increaſed her deſpair in her preſent frame of mind, he deſiſted, in the hope of a more tranquil moment. By his advice, they permitted her to take ſome wine, and ſhe, once more, ſeemed to ſleep. But a few minutes, however, had elapſed, ere ſhe awoke again, under the ſame impreſſions of horror!

Mr. Elderton, the clergyman, had not left the room, but had employed himſelf in ſilent prayer. Her deſpair now roſe to fury; her expreſſions were horribly blaſphemous,

phemous, and aſſiſtance was neceſſary to keep her in her bed. Her exertions were fatal. In the paroxyſm of her deſpair ſhe burſt a blood veſſel; the blood guſhed rapidly from her mouth, and, notwithſtanding every poſſible aſſiſtance was inſtantly procured, before the ſun aroſe, deſpairing ſhe expired!

At break of day, upon viſiting Zelotti's apartment, the keeper of the priſon diſcovered he had taken poiſon the preceding night. He had not undreſſed himſelf, and his corpſe lay a dreadful ſpectacle, ſtretched upon the floor. A ſcrap of paper lay near him, on which were ſcrawled with a pencil theſe words, barely legible, ſuppoſed to have been written after he had drunk the poiſon:—"Milwood—*there is a God!* defy him not!——Zelotti."

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

What if this curſed hand
Were thicker than itſelf with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the ſweet heavens
To waſh it white as ſnow?———

SHAKSPEARE.

THE worthy clergyman, who had witneſſed the dreadful death of Milwood, influenced by the pure motives of chriſtian charity, determined to viſit the fallen victim of her wiles. Sad change had marked the face of Barnwell. The horror of guilt had marred one of the fineſt countenances nature ever formed. No more the roſy glow of health adorned his cheek; no more the ſmile of innocence and peace hung on his lips; no longer the tranquillity that once dwelt in his boſom beamed from his eyes! Bitter miſery had traced it's ſickly characters o'er all

all his waſted form. At the entrance of Mr. Elderton he ſtarted; but ſtill kept his eyes upon the floor.

"I have intruded," ſaid Mr. Elderton, "upon hours which, I hope, are devoted to penitence, to announce to you the melancholy end of ————."

"Oh, God!" cried Barnwell, claſping his hands together, "my mother—I have ſlain my mother!"

"No—no—no," ſaid Mr. Elderton, eager to undeceive him, "I ſpeak of the unhappy partners of your guilt, who are now no more. The wretched woman died by the burſting of a blood veſſel in a paroxyſm of deſpair, and the man has poiſoned himſelf!"

"God forgive them!" cried Barnwell, "God forgive them!—Poor Milwood!"

Even

Even in his preſent awful ſituation a pang ſhot through his heart, when he heard ſhe was gone for ever!

"You mentioned a mother, Sir," ſaid Mr. Elderton; "have you a mother?"

"Oh, ſpare me, I beſeech you, whoever you are, ſpare my poor burſting heart the anguiſh of that thought!"

At that moment the door was thrown open, and Mrs. Barnwell, Eliza, and Mr. Sandall were in the room. The rumour of Barnwell's abſconding, by ſome means had reached them, and they immediately followed Sir James to Ramſgate. Soon as the wretched mother ſaw the object, which guilt had rendered her ſon; when attempting to meet her, his fetters grated on her ears, overcome by the horrid viſion, ſhe ſunk ſenſeleſs on the floor. Eliza fainted on the boſom of her brother, and the priſon rung with the impre-

cations of Barnwell on his own guilty head!

By the direction of Mr. Sandall, whoſe folly had permitted the interview, they were torn aſunder, and conveyed home to the houſe that had been Mr. Emery's. The ſhock which Mrs. Barnwell had received was ſevere, and it's effects, even when her ſenſes returned, confined her to her bed, and rendered the attendance of a phyſician neceſſary. Eliza, who loved her brother almoſt to adoration, ſuffered an inconceivable pain of heart; but her youth enabled her to ſuſtain the blow with leſs injury to her health, than their unhappy parent: an alarming attack of aſthma, to which ſhe was ſubject, occaſioned ſerious apprehenſions of her life. Though the dutiful and affectionate Eliza would not quit her bed ſide, ſhe yet divided her painfully anxious thoughts betwixt the ſick couch of her parent, and the ſad deſtiny of her brother.

In the mean time, Barnwell ſtruggled to meet his fate with reſignation; and if, at times, the horrors that ſurrounded him opened an avenue for thoughts of ſuicide, the truly pious Elderton was conſtantly at hand to adminiſter the conſolations of hope to his deſpair.

Some days paſſed, during which the remains of Sir James Barnwell were conveyed to his late ſeat, and interred. Mrs. Barnwell remained confined to the bed of ſickneſs, and very ſlender hope was entertained of her recovery.

The unfortunate victim of unlimited confidence, Mr. Freeman, had received from the numerous and injured creditors of his houſe, that diſcriminating generoſity, for which the merchants of London are celebrated in every part of the globe. He received an immediate and full diſcharge, upon aſſigning over his whole eſtates, from which an annuity of ſix hundred pounds, for his own life and that of his daughter,

were liberally ſettled upon them by the unanimous voice of the creditors, in oppoſition only to his own ſincere wiſhes to the contrary. Mr. Drudge likewiſe experienced their liberality; but the exaſperation of the majority of the creditors was fully diſplayed in their conduct to Emery, who, abandoned by his titled friends, was left literally deſtitute, and being unable to procure his certificate, the vengeance of ſeveral purſued him ſo far as to terminate the future proſpects of his exiſtence with the gloomy evils of confinement.

Such was the ſituation of his affairs when Mr. Freeman returned to Ramſgate, after the funeral of his old friend Sir James, who had left him his executor. The greateſt part of his eſtates were bequeathed to his wretched nephew, and, in failure of iſſue, to his ſiſter and her deſcendants Very handſome proviſion was made for Mrs. Barnwell and

Eliza,

Eliza, and, excepting a few complimentary legacies, no part of his property was bequeathed out of the family of his brother. The horrid deed of Barnwell received a ſtill deeper tint of horror, by the benevolent intentions thus diſplayed.

Not the combined wealth of worlds, is able to eradicate the cankering ſpeck of guilt, or prevent that courſe of conſequences which nature has decreed. Never, perhaps, was the inſufficiency of wealth to make the heart happy, more powerfully proved than in the miſerable Barnwells.

As the awful day of public trial drew near, the channels of grief flowed with more painful violence through the hearts of this moſt wretched family. The good and tender-hearted Freeman ſympathiſed deeply with the mourners, and ſtole occaſionally a thought from the melancholy image of his loved daughter, bereft of reaſon, to mingle ſorrows with them.

Barnwell had particularly requeſted to be alone, and peremptorily refuſed the viſits of all but the pious Elderton. By theſe means he gradually prepared his mind for thoſe awful ſcenes which he was ſhortly to encounter. Eliza, whoſe mind was coſiderably above the common level, calling the energies of reaſon and the hopes of religion to her aid, thus tempered the ſenſibility of her heart to ſuſtain the miſeries that preſſed heavily upon her. The following letter will exhibit the ſtate of her mind:

LETTER.

"Oh, my poor brother!—oh, George!—how ſhall I endure this greateſt of calamities that could have fallen upon me?—But I do not upbraid you, my dear, dear brother!—no, no, it is not neceſſary that a ſiſter's voice ſhould add cruel reproofs to theſe which conſcience, I am ſure, inflicts!—Oh, could that ſiſter's blood aſſuage the wounds ſhe ſees, ſhe feels are in

in your heart!—Oh, no!—her tears, her prayers are vain!—The ſtorm of paſſion, in which that heart has floated, leaves it a wreck beyond all reparation! That noble, generous, manly heart—that heart which was our boaſt, our——but let me turn from the painful retroſpect—to what?—Oh, mighty God, ſupport me!—to what?—To the ſad ſolitary cell that holds thee, that dear loved brother, who has often claſped me, in pure tranſport, to his fondeſt breaſt!—to thoſe chains, whoſe weight is nothing to thy limbs, but a load of infamy to thy once great ſoul!—Is this the ſpectacle on which imagination *now* muſt gaze!—Would the dreary picture finiſhed here!—But, ah! ſad, trembling culprit—how wilt thou face the members of that community, whoſe laws thou haſt violated?—how wilt thou meet a fellow-man's offended countenance, whoſe very nature is debaſed by a crime like thine!

"These are torturing thoughts; but these are not thy keeneſt ſufferings! I know how often the reflection of a mother's, of a ſiſter's agonies kindle in thy breaſt, thy brain—flames fiercer than the fires of Ætna! But, ah! poor ſufferer! even this is not the climax of thy miſeries!—Imagination tortures thee with all the dreadful apparatus of a public ignominious death; but there behold the period!—In the ſhame, in the pain of that hour, my loved, though fallen brother, view the conſequences of thy crimes, and Heaven ſtrengthen thee to meet them!

"Now, drooping ſpirit, riſe! Beyond that gulph a ſweetly ſoothing ſtrain lures thy approach.—Hope beckons thee to brighter realms!—No more, then, let the agoniſed ſight be limited to the bounds of time!—Endure yet a little longer the chequered ſcenes of life, where paſſion wars with reaſon, and the benevolent mind trembles

bles to contemplate the origin of vice and woe! Behold a glorious viſion, which the wondering ſoul wakes to admire, a DEITY DISPLAYED! Nor fear to raiſe thine eye! Away with terrors of imaginary wrath—away with impious expectations of retaliating fury!—Doubt not that God is Love, and when neceſſity demands no more *ſome* evil, then from the ſource of love ſhall flow UNMINGLED GOOD!

May peace ſpread her wings o'er thy mind, prays

Your affectionate ſiſter,

E. B.

The ſolemn moment now arrived, that placed Barnwell at the bar of temporal juſtice. The court was crowded with ſpectators, and as his fatal ſtory was generally known, there was ſcarcely an individual preſent, whoſe eye did not teſtify the compaſſion of his heart. The pale and trembling culprit pleaded guilty, in

a voice barely audible! The judge pronounced the awful ſentence of death in the uſual words, at the concluſion of which Barnwell exclaimed—"Oh, God!" placed his hands before his eyes, and was removed from the bar.

Conveyed to the cell appropriated to the wretched victims of death, he was left to his own reflections, and having ſolicited pen, ink, and paper, he committed ſeveral of his thoughts to writing:—

Saturday evening, 9 o'clock.

"I am condemned to die—I know the very hour of my diſſolution—on Monday morning at eight o'clock I ſhall——Why do I ſtill feel this weight of ſhame? Why is the *ignominy* of death even yet more painful to me than any apprehenſions of it's tortures? —A ſpectacle!—a public puniſhment!—a warning exhibition to the wicked of ſociety!—Oh, my poor, expiring mother, was

was it for this you ſuffered the anguiſh of my birth!—was it for this, with anxious, fond attention you hung over my cradle, and watched the very moment of my infant wants! Was it for this moſt ſhameful end, oh, ſpirit of my ſainted father, for this, that *you*, with the ſame tender vigilance, gazed on the opening intellect, nurtured each growing virtue, and rooted out the early weeds of vice!

"Oh, hear me, on my knees, thou ſacred ſhade, and ſend ſome miniſtering angel to calm the ſoul of thy afflicted, loſt, and guilty ſon!—Oh, no!—I ſee thee frown—I ſee thee point a bloody dagger to thy brother's grave, and hear the hoſt of heaven ſhriek abhorrence at ſo foul a crime!—Father, I own it—'twas this parricidal hand——but recollection ſickens at the thought—my brain is giddy, and my heart's blood chills with horror at the bare idea! Tell me, then, ſome holy

ſage, oh, tell me, how ſhall ever peace again be wooed within this boſom?

"How could I do it!—can it be poſſible!—was it this very heart, this ſame mind, that now ſhudders at the memory of the act, that could deviſe a miſchief, which, were it to do again, I think no power on earth, nor fiend of hell, could, by all it's tortures, force me to commit? —Murder!!!—Oh, God! have I not pitied the ſacrifice of a lamb to man's neceſſities? have I not often ſaved a captive fly from the torturing paſtimes of my ſchool-fellows? And yet I have committed murder—and on whom—a fellow-creature? — worſe — a benefactor!—— 'Twas a devil's blow!——

"Oh, Milwood! dare I, in ſuch a ſolemn moment, ſo near, ſo very near the dreadful entrance of eternity — dare I call back the ſpirit that has flitted o'er the gulph before me, bid it appear in that form of beauty that kindled the flame

flame of luſt in my boſom?—dare I inquire how, or from whence, thoſe tumults ſprung, that hurried on the ſoul to it's deſtruction?—Oh, vaſt reſearch!—chaos of inquiry!—Till thy form attracted me, till thy touch intoxicated me—oh, fatal beauty!—I could not have allowed even a thought of injury to a fellow-creature admiſſion to my heart! What, then, wert thou, oh, wond'rous power, what was the nature of that potent influence, which thy charms ſhed o'er my ſoul, that it could change the ſoft and gentle influences of compaſſion, that ever played around my heart, into the maddened impulſe of a parricide?—Say, was it paſſion?"

As Barnwell wrote the laſt ſentence, the pious Mr. Elderton entered the cell, and caſting his eye over his paper, caught the queſtion.——"Yes, my young friend," ſaid he, "'twas paſſion; but aſk thyſelf, if, in the compoſition of our natures, paſſion has no antidote? Where

was

was the voice of reaſon, when firſt the ſubtle tempter wooed thee to thy ruin?"

"Stifled," ſaid Barnwell, "by the ſtronger cries of paſſion."

"Granted," ſaid Mr. Elderton; "but paſſion's boiſterous breath became, at length, exhauſted, and conſcience *then* was heard!——Ah, poor friend!" continued he, taking him affectionately by the hand, "had you but liſtened *then*, though you had ſinned, yet how far ſhort would you have ſtopped of your preſent depth of guilt! But I wonder not, when I contemplate the uncommon talents of the ſeducer, the frailties of nature, and the inexperience of your heart. Had you but revealed your ſituation, the ſtrong foundation of all Milwood's plans muſt have vaniſhed, and you would have been ſaved. Fatal reverſe!—Oh, may the dread example operate with every heſitating youth, who, bending beneath the weight

of

of ſecret ſhame, longs, yet dreads, to confide his ſorrows and his errors in ſome pitying breaſt. And may each individual, honoured with the name of parent, or of guardian, who hears thy woful ſtory, aim, with increaſing zeal, to WIN THE CONFIDENCE of YOUTHFUL HEARTS! May they reflect of what warring compounds human hearts are framed, reflect how much at variance with the inſtitutions of ſociety are many of our paſſions! And God forgive the man, who, by a COLD FROWN at venial errors, ſhall DRIVE HIS SON TO HIDE THE WEAKNESS OF HIS NATURE IN AN ALIEN'S BREAST! But let us turn from a painful retroſpect to ſcenes, where Chriſtian hope points our attention.

Fortunately for Barnwell, Mr. Elderton was no bigot; he laboured not to bend his penitent to the feigned belief of controverted doctrines; he laboured not to *exchange* the principles of reaſon for Chriſtian

Chriſtian faith, but aimed to ſtrengthen the hopes of the former by the aſſurances of the latter. He ſucceeded, and the laſt thoughts of Barnwell were thus expreſſed, with a tranquillity that conſoles the heart, which pities his ſad end, and bows the ſpirit that would queſtion the JUSTICE of that OMNIPOTENCE, that permitted his fall.

Sunday midnight.

"A few more fleeting hours!—How awful rolls the echo of the midnight bell along theſe dark and diſmal vaults!—Solemn, ſilent hour!—How many ſons of care now ſleep, lightened of their anxious loads!—I, too, ſhall ſhortly ſleep—but *they* ſhall wake again to care—again become the ſport of hopes and fears!—Shall *I*, too, wake?——Say, can the narrow limits of an earthly life bound the exiſtence of the aſpiring ſoul? Oh, trembling inmate of this frail form, prepare!—thy preſent tenement in a few hours falls, for ever falls!—Prepare to wing thy flight, ſee brighter

brighter realms appear, and kindred ſpirits wait to waft thee to their bleſt abode! I'll think no more of earth then!—Mother—ſiſter—friends—and if I have a foe—all, all farewell!—Seek not to know why Heaven permitted murder, or how my arm has done a deed, at which my heart recoils! Evil is in the world; and man's beſt employ is to avoid it's certain conſequences, as much as poſſible, himſelf, and, if he have benevolence of heart, ſtudy to ameliorate it's ſad effects on others. There is, there muſt be, a recompence for virtue—oft denied here—ſince even guilty wretches, like myſelf, can feel a hope, that ſuſtains the ſoul at the approach of ignominious death!—A hope not to be defined—a hope beyond their comprehenſion, who do not feel its influence. Yet is it not leſs real, leſs worth reſearch; for, in the agonies of diſſolution, what ſounds ſo ſoothing to the ſoul, as the ſweet voice that whiſpers—"There is another, and a better world."

Theſe were the laſt words he wrote. The hour of ſuffering, of ſhame, of death arrived, and Barnwell having penitently yielded to the conſequences of his crimes, his liberated ſpirit winged it's trembling flight to the bright throne of mercy!

The pangs a mother felt at this ſad cataſtrophe, who can deſcribe? Happily they were ſhort — ſoon the welcome herald, Death, arrived, and changed thoſe temporal ſcenes, a ſon's crimes had rendered painful, for views of bliſs no clouds can ever darken! Maria, too, fell, like a blighted bloſſom, to the earth, and with her laſt ſigh mingled the name of Barnwell.

The worthy Mr. Freeman met the expected event with calm, yet heart-felt ſorrow. The painful viciſſitudes of fortune, reſerved for this the evening of his life, had bowed his mind; and having ſtripped him of this his laſt hold on earthly

ly bliſs, he endured, with reſignation, an exiſtence of tranquillity, almoſt without a hope, or an anxiety!

Eliza, the ſiſter of Barnwell, became his charge, and if ever a temporal concern floated in his mind, it was on her account. By the recent ſad events ſhe acquired the very large property of her late uncle, and retired with her guardian to his reſidence. Sorrow oft viſited her in this retirement, when memory muſed on melancholy ſcenes gone by. Yet Eliza ſtruggled with regret: ſhe had imbibed ſome early leſſons of ſound and pure philoſophy, the advantages of which now ſhone conſpicuous. She contemplated, with earneſtneſs, her ſituation, and the ſtrongeſt feeling of her heart was a dread, that ſhe ſhould miſapply the loan of wealth, which Heaven had entruſted to her care.

Her next concern was, to render Mr. Freeman as happy as her ſociety and means could make him, and ſhe aimed with zealous

zealous diligence to amuſe his reflection from the paſt. The ſituation of the Miſs Emerys and their mother attracted her attention, and indulged her with an opportunity of exerciſing that benevolence, which was the chief trait in her character. With the conſent of Mr. Freeman ſhe afforded them an aſylum in her houſe, and ſtudied to make their dependence as little felt as poſſible. She frequently enabled the daughters, by her generoſity, to remit thoſe comforts to their father, which ameliorated the horrors of confinement; and ſhe looked forward to the termination of her minority for the pleaſing ability of placing them beyond the fear of dependence, by the ſettlement of an annuity, that would enſure them, with frugality, the decencies, though not the luxuries, of life.

In ſuch delightful employ, we leave Eliza, whoſe diſcriminating generoſity afforded

forded her many heart-felt pleaſures, and the exerciſe of which was her conſtant reſource, whenever memory pointed to the conſequences of CONCEALED ERRORS in the melancholy fate of her brother.

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